



**104th ANNUAL
CONVENTION
PROCEEDINGS**

**The American Legion
Department of
South Dakota**

Including
**REPORTS OF OFFICERS
AND COMMITTEES
2022-2023**

June 8-11, 2023

Oacoma, South Dakota

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PROCEEDINGS
ONE-HUNDRED-FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
THE AMERICAN LEGION

Department of South Dakota

June 8-11, 2023

The Pre-Convention meeting of the American Legion Department Finance Commission was held at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, June 8, 2023, in The Hale Room at the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, South Dakota, followed by the meeting of the South Dakota American Legion Department Executive Committee, also in the Hale 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 9, 2023, in the Howe Room in the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, South Dakota. The meetings of the other Convention Committees were held in rooms so designated in the Event Center at 1:30 p.m.

The South Dakota American Legion Foundation met in the Wheeler Room at 3:00 p.m.

A joint Convention, American Legion/American Legion Auxiliary, memorial service was held in the Howe/Glass room of the Arrowwood Conference 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 9, 2023, in the Hale and Oacoma Rooms at the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, South Dakota with Glen Wahus, National Vice Commander, Midwest Region, as the guest speaker.

The 104th Annual Convention of The American Legion Department of South Dakota was called to order at 9:00 a.m., Saturday, June 10th, 2023, at the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, South Dakota, by Department Commander Doug Feltman of Chamberlain, 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 Doug Feltman led the delegates in the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was given by Department Chaplain Tom Henley, after which Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel conducted the POW/MIA ceremony. Department Commander Feltman 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-FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

The ONE-HUNDRED-FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION of The American Legion Department of South Dakota is hereby called, and in conformity with action taken at the One-Hundredth Convention, will be held in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8, 9, 10, and 11, 2023.

PURPOSE

The Convention is called to elect officers for the ensuing year and delegates to the 104th 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 May 24th, 2023. 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 May 24th, or turned in at the Department Convention Registration desk in Oacoma. Note that the 2023 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 Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, Thursday, June 8th, 2023, 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 Arrowwood Conference Center, immediately following the adjournment of the 104th 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 10, 2023, 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 9th, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. at the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, SD, in rooms designated for that purpose. The directory of meeting rooms will be available upon entry into the Arrowwood

Conference 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 9th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., in the Arrowwood Conference Center, Oacoma, 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 April 29th, 2023. 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 104th 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 11th, 2023, or at the conclusion of all other business of the Department Convention, whichever occurs first.

Kevin Hempel
Department Adjutant

Doug Feltman
Department Commander

Commander Feltman read a letter of Welcome from the Oacoma Town Board President, Gary Dominiack, in his absence.

Convention host, Post #3 Commander, Ken Anderson, delivered his greetings and welcomed the assembled delegates to Oacoma.

State Vice Commander for Districts 1-2, Doug Harris, responded to the welcome.

Department of South Dakota Disabled American Veterans Commander, Christine Spiers, was introduced by Commander Feltman, and delivered greetings.

At this time, Lt. Governor Larry Roden arrived and was escorted to the stage. Department Commander Feltman read Lt. Governor Roden's biography and introduced him to the convention body. Lt. Governor Roden addressed the assembly.

The Chair then recognized the Senior Vice Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota, David Baumiller, who brought greetings from their organization.

Department Commander Feltman announced that Senator John Thune was unable to attend the Department Convention but had sent a letter to be read in his absence. Commander Feltman asked Vice Commander Doug Harris to come forward to read Senator Thune's letter of greetings to the assembled delegates.

At this point, Department Commander Feltman called NEC Denny Brenden, Watertown, to the podium for the purpose of an introduction. NEC Brenden introduced National Vice Commander Glen Wahus from the Department of North Dakota to address the body of the convention.

Commander Feltman introduced and called upon G.P. Carmichael, Military and Veterans Affairs Specialist, from Senator Round's office for his remarks.

South Dakota's lone Congressman to the United States House of Representatives, Dusty Johnson, was introduced by Department Commander Feltman. Congressman Johnson addressed the convention body and discussed items of interest.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary of the SD Department of Veterans Affairs was introduced by Commander Feltman and addressed the assembly.

Department Commander Feltman introduced Andy Lyngen of Garretson, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee, for the purpose of providing the Credentials Committee's initial report. Chairman Lyngen presented that report to the Convention.

Commander Feltman then introduced Regan McClurkin, Summerset, SD (Piedmont Post 311), Chairman of the Convention Rules Committee, for the purpose of a report. Regan McClurkin 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 Regan McClurkin, Piedmont, at 1:30p.m., Friday, June 9, 2023, at Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center in Oacoma, SD.

In addition to Chairman McClurkin, the following were present: District 1 – Chairman McClurkin of Piedmont Post 311; District 2 – Absent; District 3 – Jeff Hrabanek of Colome Post 146; District 4 – Absent; District 5 – Tim Jurgens of Milbank Post 9; District 6 – Annette Dunham of Iroquois Post 280; District 7 – Bill Peters of Sioux Falls Post 15; and District 8 – absent.

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. 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, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bill Peters and seconded by Tim Jurgens; no discussion; motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Regan McClurkin, Chairman**

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

Department Commander Doug Feltman introduced Tom Henley of Aurora, 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 Tom Henley of Aurora on Friday, June 9, 2023, at 1:30 p.m., at Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center in Oacoma, SD.

Present besides Chairman Henley of Aurora were the following: District 1 – Jerry Lolley of Sturgis Post 33; District 2 – Doug Harris of Rapid City Post 22; District 3 – Larry Madsen of Gettysburg Post 135; District 4 – Dale Strom of Aberdeen Post 24; District 5 – Chairman Tom Henley of Aurora Post 230; District 6 – Paul Hanson of DeSmet Post 138; District 7 – Pat Mullen of Madison Post 25; and District 8 – Jim Hornstra of Springfield Post 323.

Chairman Henley 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 one Resolution:

Convention Resolution No. 23-2 was drafted by Redfield Post 92.

Chairman Henley spoke in support of this resolution. Larry Price gave a quick update on the status of this Resolution at the National Level – it is still under consideration. Therefore, we would like to pass it at the Department Level.

RESOLVED, that at the February 2023 regular meeting of the Clay Kiser Post 92, Redfield, SD, our membership urges The American Legion Department of South Dakota to establish a state EMT of the Year award; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that like the Law and Firefighter of the Year awards, post across the state be encouraged to participate in the EMT of the Year award and the Department winner be recognized at the Department convention or an appropriate American Legion function.

A motion to send forward with a Do Pass was made by Pat Mullen, seconded by Paul Hanson. Motion carried.

District 3 representative Larry Madsen spoke about Boys State. He encouraged those present to speak at the Post and District levels in favor of the program. He also mentioned the different scholarships that are available to those individuals who do attend. Discussion was held. There were complaints about the on-line registration process and that the Post doesn't know the boys are interested. Larry pointed out that this was open to the home-schooled boys as well.

Madsen also spoke on the Oratorical contest and the scholarships that are available. 20% of the participants at the National Level are homeschooled. 20% are first generation citizens. He mentioned that the Department is putting together a subcommittee to consider the possibility of changing the day of the Department competition and asked for input from the attendees. At one point the contest was not part of Midwinter and was held separately. This coming year, Midwinter is from Feb 16-18, 2024. The contest would be on Sunday, February 18th.

Larry Price spoke on Youth Trooper Academy. He reported that the program was only about a week and a half away. So far there have been no cancellations. Lt. Maunu, the HP POC for several years is retiring and the new POC is in the middle of being trained. The number of applicants this year was 40. Thursday June 29th is "blue cap" day with the 30th being graduation. The cost for YTA will be the same as Boys State in 2024 - \$250. We now have 30 YTA graduates who are either in law enforcement and/or the military.

Air Rifle was addressed by Mike Kraft, Britton Post 80. A recent competition in Pierre drew over 3,000 competitors. Posts were encouraged to put together teams and talk about the competitions/scholarships available.

A motion to adjourn at 2:22 was made by Jerry Lolley and seconded by Pat Mullen. Motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted,
Tom Henley, Chairman**

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

The Chair recognized Larry Madsen, Gettysburg, Chairman of the Department Americanism Commission, for the purpose of providing the Americanism Commission report. The report was adopted. Chairman Madsen then assisted Commander Feltman in presenting the Americanism Awards for the Department for the 2022-2023 year:

Department Americanism Chairman Larry Madsen 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
Pike and Huska Post #230 of Aurora, 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
Frank J. Brune Post #140 of Salem, 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 2021-2022 to take back to their post and display as a past award winner. Those posts were Burke Post #28, Castlewood Post #250, Chamberlain Post #3, Spearfish Post #164, and Rapid City Post #22.

Overall, best Department Americanism program winners for 2022-2023 were:

Certificate of Distinguished Service awarded to

Spearfish, Inc. American Legion Post #164 of Spearfish, SD.

Certificate of Meritorious Service awarded to

Rapid City American Legion Post #22 of Rapid City, SD.

Individual Americanism Award awarded to

Jack French of Spearfish, Inc. American Legion Post #164, Spearfish, SD.

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

The 2023 Department Oratorical Champion is Elena Andrews of Beresford, SD. Unfortunately, she could not be with us for further recognition.

Department Commander Feltman introduced Marv Tisdall of Box Elder, SD, Chairman of the Convention Resolutions Committee, for the purpose of a report. Chairman Tisdall 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 Marvin Tisdall of Box Elder, at 10:05 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2023, at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center in Oacoma, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Tisdall of Box Elder were as follows: District 1 - Marvin Tisdall of Box Elder Post #315; District 2 - Chris Rendon of Rapid City Post #320; District 3 - Gene Bruns of Colome Post #146; District 4 - Bob Thomason of Selby Post #100; District 5 - Betty "Sam" Vaughn of Brookings Post #74; District 6 - Rolly Quam of Arlington Post #42; District 7 - Nancy Grandy of Garretson Post #23; and District 8 - Robert Kucera of Wagner Post #11.

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

Kevin Morello of Piedmont Post #311 was appointed as secretary.

The committee reviewed 4 resolutions.

Resolution SDAL 23-1 submitted by Chamberlain Post #3.

RESOLVED, that the Department R.C. Gabrielson Memorial Leadership Award selection committee will also select the Department of South Dakota Legionnaire of the Year.

Moved by Bob Thomason, seconded by Chris Rendon to send to the Internal Organization Committee. Motion carried.

Resolution SDAL 23-2 submitted by Clay Kiser Post 92 of Redfield. RESOLVED, that at the February 2023 regular meeting of the Clay Kiser Post 92, Redfield, SD, our membership urges The American Legion Department of South Dakota to establish a state EMT of the Year award; and be it finally RESOLVED, that like the Law and Firefighter of the Year awards, post across the state be encouraged to participate in the EMT of the Year award and the Department winner be recognized at the Department convention or an appropriate American Legion function.

Moved by Chris Rendon, seconded by Gene Bruns to send to the Americanism Committee. Motion carried.

Resolution SDAL 23-3 submitted by Chester Post 136.

RESOLVED, by The American Legion Department of South Dakota in Annual Department Convention assembled in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion support legislation to amend Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 38, Section 38.630 (2) to open eligibility for Government-issued markers on privately marked graves regardless of the date of death of the Veteran.

Moved by Chris Rendon, seconded by Sam Vaughn to send to the Rehabilitation Committee. Motion carried.

Resolution SDAL 23-4 submitted by Chester Post 136.

RESOLVED, by The American Legion Department of South Dakota, in Annual Department Convention assembled in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion support legislation to amend existing language for the 10 percent rating in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to read “or; minimum evaluation for an individual who requires continuous medication for control,” and, be it finally RESOLVED, That The American Legion support legislation to amend existing language for all rating requirements in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to better align with hypertension standards widely recognized by the broader medical community.

Moved by Bob Thomason, Seconded by Robert Kucera to send to the Rehabilitation Committee. Motion carried.

The Convention Resolutions Committee drafted 1 resolution.

Convention Resolution SDAL 23-5 was drafted by the Convention Resolutions Committee to express thanks to Chamberlain Post 3, for hosting a great convention. **Moved by Bob Thomason, seconded by Rolly Quam to Recommend “Do Pass”.** Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Resolutions Committee meeting was recessed at 10:45 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Marvin Tisdall, Chairman**

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

The Chair then introduced Chris Van Delist of Rapid City, Boys State Director for the South Dakota American Legion, who gave the Boys State Report. The report was adopted. Director Van Delist proceeded to introduce the 2023 Boys State Governor, Gavin Pischke of Hartford, who addressed the delegation.

Department Commander Feltman called on PDC Hugh Holmes, Mitchell, to give the Annual Educational Scholarship Committee Chairman report. PDC Holmes presented the annual report of that committee. The report was adopted.

The Chair recognized PDC Byron Callies, Watertown, Chairman of the Department Internal Affairs Commission, to give the annual report of that Commission. Four resolutions were submitted to Department headquarters and reviewed by the Commission. None of the resolutions reviewed impacted the Department Constitution and By Laws. All were recommended to be passed to the Convention Resolutions Committee for action. The report was adopted.

Dan Wyatt of Madison, SD was called upon by Department Commander Feltman to give the Convention Internal Organization Commission Report.

CONVENTION INTERNAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The Internal Organization Committee was called to order by Chairman Dan Wyatt of Madison, at 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2023, at the Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center, Oacoma, SD.

Those present beside Chairman Wyatt were as follows: District 1 – Brian Dean of Spearfish Post #164; District 2 – Marc Lamphere of Hot Springs Post # 71; District 3 – Travis Hedrick of Ft. Pierre Post #20; District 4 – Perry Schmidt of Redfield Post #92; District 5 – Byron Callies of Watertown Post #17; District 6 - Charemon Dunham of Iroquois Post # 280; District 7 – Dan Wyatt of Madison Post #25; District 8 – Absent.

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

The committee reviewed one resolution.

Resolution SDAL 23-1 submitted by Chamberlain Post #3.

RESOLVED, that the Department R.C. Gabrielson Memorial Leadership Award selection committee will also select the Department of South Dakota Legionnaire of the Year.

Discussion was held regarding this resolution.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the resolution, 7-0.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the Convention Internal Organization Committee was declared adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Dan Wyatt, Chairman**

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

Commander Feltman 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, 2022 State Baseball Tournament baseballs to Department Commander Feltman.

The Chair then recognized the 2022-2023 Membership Chairman, Rod Smith, who gave the annual Membership report. We are at 90.97% and need 1,538 new and renewals for the Department to reach 100%. Concerns include there are some rural posts where there are no veterans to recruit. This was discussed on a regional zoom meeting with all Departments present expressing the same concern and our national representatives are telling us this has been discussed for several years with no solution so far. The report was adopted. At this time, Department Adjutant Hempel announced, and Department Commander Feltman and Membership Chairman Smith handed out membership awards.

A personalized coffee mug will be presented to each District Membership Chairman who had achieved at least 75% of their District membership goal by November 9th. Three Districts met the goal. They are: District 3 – Steve Stier, District 5 – Chad Hardy, and District 6 – Dave Gutzmer.

The next award is the Post Go-Getter Medallion. Posts must have reached or exceeded 95% of their membership by March 9, 2022.

District 1: Timber Lake Post 83, Faith Post 106, McIntosh Post 139, Eagle Butte Post 308, Piedmont Post 311, Bullhead Post 324

District 2: Custer Post 46, Rosebud Post 125, Belvidere Post 144, Philip Post 173, Wall Post 246, Porcupine Post 294, Parmelee Post 295, St. Francis Post 297

District 3: Gregory Post 6, Burke Post 28, Miller Post 38, Vivian Post 157, Winner Post 169

District 4: Groton Post 39, Hecla Post 68, Northville Post 149, Hosmer Post 189, Frederick Post 273

District 5: Milbank Post 9, Bryant Post 37, Rosholt Post 48, Sisseton Post 50, Veblen Post 76, Astoria Post 103, Willow Lake Post 113, Volga Post 114, Sinai Post 133, Langford Post 141, New Effington Post 180, Agency Village Post 314

District 6: Chamberlain Post 3, Plankinton Post 5, Lake Preston Post 63, Fulton Post 95, Wessington Post 110, Alpena Post 116, Emery Post 166, Pukwana Post 201, Erwin Post 241, Badger Post 260, Ethan Post 261, Iroquois Post 280

District 7: Garretson Post 23, Harrisburg Post 45, Dell Rapids Post 65, Alcester Post 86, Egan Post 97, Nunda Post 105, Trent Post 122, Chester Post 136, Wentworth Post 161, North Sioux City Post 319

District 8: Lake Andes Post 10, Wakonda Post 13, Parker Post 30, Platte Post 115, Viborg Post 117, Springfield Post 132, Menno Post 152, Scotland Post 155, Davis Post 176, Delmont Post 249, Greenwood Post 257

Commander Feltman's "Building a Stronger Family" Award will be given to all Posts that achieved 100% of their membership goal by February 8th. These awards go to the following Posts:

District 1: Timber Lake Post 83, Faith Post 106, Eagle Butte Post 308, Bullhead Post 324

District 2: Rosebud Post 125, Belvidere Post 144

District 3: Burke Post 28, Vivian Post 157

District 4: Hecla Post 68, Northville Post 149

District 5: Milbank Post 9, Rosholt Post 48, Sisseton Post 50, Sinai Post 133, Langford Post 141, New Effington Post 180

District 6: Plankinton Post 5, Emery Post 166, Pukwana Post 201, Erwin Post 241, Badger Post 260

District 7: Egan Post 97, Trent Post 122, Wentworth Post 161,

District 8: Lake Andes Post 10, Viborg Post 117, Springfield Post 132, Davis Post 176, Greenwood Post 257

The Department had 10 Post Families earn the 100% Family Ribbon. To earn this award, the Post, the Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and the Legion Riders, if the Post has them, must all achieve 100% membership. These included: Gregory Post/Auxiliary/SAL #6, Wakonda Post/Auxiliary #13, Custer Post/SAL/Riders #46, Rosholt Post/Auxiliary #48, Egan Post/Auxiliary #97, Nunda Post/Auxiliary #105, Volga Post/Auxiliary #114, Trent Post/Auxiliary #122, Chester Post/Auxiliary #136.

The "Pride of the Prairie" Post Excellence 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, and 4, there were a number of Posts that completed 4 of the 5 requirements but none that completed them all.

In goal group 3, which is 30-49 members, a number of Posts completed all tasks; the one with the highest membership average was Sturgis Post 33.

In goal group 5, which is 91-150 members, a number of Posts completed all tasks; the one with the highest membership average was Lake Preston Post #63.

In goal group 6, which is more than 150 members, we had a number of Posts that completed all five requirements and the one with the highest average membership percentage was Sioux Falls Post #15.

Department Commander Feltman called PDC and Scouting Chairman, Fred Nelson, Spearfish, to the podium to deliver the annual Scouting Committee report. The report was adopted. The 2023 South Dakota Eagle Scout of the Year, Grant Roth of Sioux Falls, SD was introduced and addressed the convention body.

The Chair recognized PDC Hugh Holmes who offered comments on the Legionnaires Insurance Trust Program.

Commander Feltman called on Harry Boner of Castlewood, SD, 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 Harry Boner of Castlewood, at 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2023, at Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center in Oacoma, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Boner were as follows: District 1 – absent; District 2 – Ernie Sanford of Rapid City Post #22; District 3 – Gene Opbroek of Gregory Post #6; District 4 – Bob Thomason of Selby Post #100; District 5 – Noel Cummins of Milbank Post #9; District 6 – Vilas Kurtenbach of Ethan Post #261; District 7 – Tony Grandy of Garretson Post #23; and District 8 – Dennis Stahlecker of Delmont Post #249.

Chairman Boner 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.

Chairman Boner was appointed as secretary.

The committee reviewed zero resolutions.

There floor was opened for discussion. No topics were discussed.

There being no further business to come before the committee, with motion by Noel Cummins and second by Vilas Kurtenbach, the Convention National Security Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Harry Boner, Chairman**

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

Clayton Nei of Castlewood, SD, Chairman of the Convention Employment Committee, was called to the podium by Commander Feltman to give that report.

CONVENTION EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The meeting of the State Convention Employment Committee was called to order by Chairman Clayton Nei of Castlewood, Friday, June 9th, at 1:30 p.m., at the Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center in Oacoma, SD.

The following committee members were present besides Chairman Nei: District 1 – Skip Collver of Box Elder Post #315; District 2 – Jim Preston of Hermosa Post #303; District 3 - absent; District 4 – Gary Warne of Aberdeen Post #24; District 5 – Clayton Nei of Castlewood Post #250; District 6 – Ken Anderson of Chamberlain Post #6; District 7 – John Bachmeier of Sioux Falls Post #15; and District 8 – Clayton Rados of Wagner Post #11.

Chairman Nei 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 0 resolutions.

Gary Warne informed us that the USARA Department of Labor has been combined from the ND and SD into one department and has moved to Aberdeen, SD for its headquarters.

There being no further business to come before the committee, a motion to recess was made by John Bachmeier and seconded by Gary Warne, motion carried. The Convention Employment Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Clayton Nei, Chairman**

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

Department Commander Feltman then recognized Warren Aas, Watertown, SD, (Sisseton Post #50), 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 at 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 9th, 2023, in the Oacoma Room at the Arrowhead Resort Convention Center in Oacoma, SD.

Those present besides Chairman Aas were: District 1 – Kristine Seidl of Box Elder Post #315; District 2 – Chris Rendon of Rapid City Post #320; District 3 – Jeff Hrabanek of Colome Post # 146; District 4 – Ron Hofer of Roscoe Post #259; District 5 – Betty “Sam” Vaughn of Brookings Post #74; District 6 – Paul Payne of Plankinton Post #5; District 7 – Dale Hill of Sioux Falls Post #15; and District 8 – Greg Geiman of Scotland, SD (Wagner Post #11).

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

Courtney Steffen of Madison, SD (Chester Post #136) was appointed as secretary.

The Convention Rehabilitation Committee was assigned two resolutions for review and action.

Resolution SDAL 23-3 submitted by Chester Post #136

RESOLVED, By The American Legion Department of South Dakota in Annual Department Convention assembled in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion support legislation to amend Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 38.630 (2) to open eligibility for Government-issued markers on privately marked graves regardless of the date of death of the Veteran; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 104th Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 25-31, 2023.

Motion by Dale Hill of Sioux Falls, seconded by Paul Payne of Plankinton, to recommend a DO PASS on this resolution. Motion Carried.

Resolution SDAL 23-4 submitted by Chester Post #136

RESOLVED, By The American Legion Department of South Dakota in Department Executive Committee Meeting assembled in Watertown, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion supports legislation to amend existing language for a 10 percent rating in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to read “or; minimum evaluation for an individual who requires continuous medication for control,” and, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports legislation to amend existing language for all rating requirements in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to better align with hypertension standards widely recognized by the broader medical community; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 104th Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 25-31, 2023.

Motion by Betty “Sam” Vaughn of Brookings, Seconded by Paul Payne of Plankinton to recommend a DO PASS on this resolution. Motion Carried.

There being no further business to come before the committee, a motion was made by Jeff Hrabanek of Colome, seconded by Kristine Seidl of Box Elder to adjourn. The Convention Rehabilitation Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 2:15pm.

**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 Feltman 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 Feltman then announced the VA&R awards. The 2023 award went to Spearfish, Inc. Post 164, Spearfish.

Commander Feltman 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 talked about the Public Safety Awards and continued with the presentation of the Firefighter of the Year Award. This year's recipient was Cassandra Christy of Rapid City. Ms. Christy was called to the podium to accept her award. Chairman Price then presented the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year to Thomas Mossman of Rapid City, who was on hand to receive this honor.

Commander Feltman recognized Department Finance Officer, Krisma DeWitt of Watertown, (Castlewood Post #250), who gave the financial report for the Department. A full financial report will appear in the Convention Proceedings. The report was adopted.

Commander Feltman called Department Chaplain, Tom Henley of Aurora, to join him on stage. Together, they presented the American Legion, Department of South Dakota Good Samaritan Award to Delon Mork of Madison, SD for his outstanding commitment to the Children's Miracle Network.

Department Commander Feltman called Jim Kurtz, Garretson, Chairman of the South Dakota American Legion Foundation Board of Directors for the annual report on the foundation. The report was adopted.

Department Commander Doug Feltman called all of the 2023 District Legionnaires of the Year to the front of the stage to be recognized. Commander Feltman presented a framed Certificate of Commendation to each of them.

District 1 — Kevin Klunder of American Legion Post #164, Spearfish.
District 2 — Lyle Tolsma of American Legion Post #22, Rapid City.
District 3 — Robert Vrbsky of American Legion Post #146, Colome.
District 4 — Doug Hamilton of American Legion Post #39, Groton.
District 5 — Brant Mathiason of American Legion Post #74, Brookings.
District 6 — Brett Anderson of American Legion #63, Lake Preston.
District 7 — Bill Larson of American Legion Post #25, Madison.
District 8 — Marlin Reynolds of American Legion Post #13, Wakonda.

Commander Feltman called upon PDC Terry Hanson, Arlington, to announce the selection of the 2023 South Dakota American Legion "Legionnaire of the Year."

PDC Hanson announced the selection of Kevin Klunder, Spearfish American Legion Post #164, as the 2023 Department Legionnaire of the Year. Kevin was presented with the 2023 South Dakota American Legion Legionnaire of the Year plaque to commemorate this important achievement.

PDC Hanson then proceeded to announce the recipient of the Robert C. Gabrielson Memorial Leadership Award. The 2023 winner of this award was Doug Harris of Rapid City Post #22.

The Chair recognized the Department Historian, Fred Lee of Sioux Falls (Humboldt Post # 62), who gave his report. The report was adopted.

Department Historian Lee announced that there 2 entries in the Department History contest and called the following winners to the stage and presented them with a certificate to commemorate their achievement:

1st Place

Sioux Falls Post 15, Sioux Falls
Sharon Taplett-Lundgren, Historian

2nd Place

Potter Post 3, Chamberlain
Delores Arbach, Historian

Department Commander Feltman called Department Adjutant Kevin 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.

The single candidate running for the Department Vice Commander representing Districts 1 and 2 was Doug Harris of Rapid City Post #22. The delegates from those Districts unanimously voted and elected Doug Harris as the Department Vice Commander to represent District 1-2 for the 2023-2024 year.

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

Department Commander Feltman led the convention delegates by paying proper respect to our Flag with a hand salute and then declared the 104th Annual Department Convention in recess until Sunday morning, June 11th, 2023, at 9:00am.

SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2023

The final session of the 104th Annual Convention of the South Dakota American Legion was reconvened at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, June 11, 2023, by Department Commander Doug Feltman following patriotic music selections by the South Dakota American Legion Band. Commander Feltman led the delegates in a salute to the Colors after which the invocation was offered by Chaplain Tom Henley.

Commander Feltman called on Andy Lyngen, Garretson, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee for the purpose of presenting the committee's second report.

Jim Kurtz, President of the South Dakota American Legion Foundation, was called on by the Chair for a report on the Fun Auction from the previous night.

The Chair recognized Chris Van Delist, Chairman of the Department Legislative Committee, for the purpose of giving that Committee's annual report. Chairman Van Delist moved for the adoption of the report. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The report was adopted.

Commander Feltman recognized Mike Kumm, Chairman of the Convention Legislative Committee for the purpose of a report. Chairman Kumm gave his report.

CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Commander:

The Convention Legislative Committee was called to order by Chairman Mike Kumm of North Sioux City, at 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2023, at Cedar Shores Resort and Conference Center, Oacoma, SD.

In addition to Chairman Kumm, the following members were present: District 1 – Phil Anderson of Piedmont Post #311; District 2 – Trishia Daily of Hot Springs Post #71; District 3 – absent; District 4 – Aaron Grant of Groton Post #39; District 5 – Russell Mileham of Brookings Post #74; District 6 – Tim Thomas of Chamberlain Post #3; District 7 – Mike Kumm of North Sioux City Post #319; and District 8 – absent.

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

Aaron Grant was appointed as secretary.

The Convention Legislative Committee was assigned zero resolutions.

No further business was discussed. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Mileham: the was no discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Respectfully submitted,
Mike Kumm, Chairman**

Chairman Kumm moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Legislative Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Feltman declared the Convention Rehabilitation Committee Report adopted.

Department Commander Feltman called National Executive Committeeman Denny Brenden, Watertown, 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 Feltman. Commander Hanson reported on the SAL year and announced the new officers for the coming year. Incoming SAL Detachment Commander, Shane Lamer of Hartford, Montrose Squadron #154, addressed the convention body. SAL National Executive Committeeman, Terry Hanson, Arlington, also addressed the assembled delegates.

Commander Feltman recognized Harry Boner, Castlewood, Chairman of the Children and Youth Committee, who gave that committee's annual report. The report was adopted.

Commander Feltman called on Courtney Steffen, Madison, Chester Post #136, Chairman of the Media and Communications Committee, for the purpose of a report from that committee. The report was adopted. Steffen proceeded to give her annual Department Service Officer report as well. The DSO 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 Doug Feltman delivered his Annual Commander's Report. There is not another group of people as dedicated and committed to helping our veterans and strengthening our communities than the Legion family. Thank you for

trusting in me to be your Commander. And thank you for what you do for The American Legion.

Commander Feltman 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 — Sioux Falls American Legion

Post #15, Sioux Falls, SD.

Editor, Diane Diekman

Second Place — Burrows Young American Legion

Post #114, Volga, SD

Editor, Kim Chase

Third Place — Thayer-Waters American Legion

Post #146, Colome, SD.

Editor, Jeff Hrabanek

Honorable Mention — Henry G Fix American Legion

Post #23, Garretson, SD

Editor, Nancy Grandy

Commander Feltman 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 Steve Stier of Onida at 1:00 P.M. on Friday June 9, 2023, Cedar Shores Resort and Convention Center, Oacoma, SD to consider applications for future MidWinter Conferences and Department Conventions.

The following members were present: Chairman Stier, District 1 – Peter Sorensen of Box Elder Post #315; District 2 – Al Tallman of Hot Springs Post #71; District 3 – Steve Stier of Onida Post #79; District 4 – Bruce Babcock of Groton Post #39; District 5 – Randy Winge of Watertown Post #17; District 6 – Jake Salathe of Huron Post #7; District 7 – Charles Dubbe of Humboldt Post #62; District 8 – Wesley Rye of Wakonda Post #13.

Chairman Stier 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.

The Committee considered invitations and bids to host the 2028 South Dakota American Legion Department convention. Department convention will be held at the Crossroads Convention Center in Huron, SD, June 15-18, 2028. There were no bids for Mid-Winter 2028.

There being no further business to come before the committee, there was a motion to adjourn by Jake Salathe and a second by Chuck Dubbe. The Convention Next Meeting Place Committee meeting was declared adjourned at 1:40 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,
Steve Stier, Chairman**

Chairman Stier moved for the adoption of the report of the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee Report, the motion was duly seconded and carried. Department Commander Feltman declared the Convention Next Meeting Place Committee Report adopted.

Commander Feltman recognized Andy Lyngen, Chairman of the Convention Credentials Committee for the final reading of the Credential report.

Commander Feltman announced the 2023 Department Convention Sweepstakes winners as follows:

\$1000 – Barry Bultena of Beresford
\$500 – Travis Hedrick of Pierre
\$300 – Carrie Henrickson of Mitchell
\$200 – Wayne Gutzmer of Black Hawk
\$100 – James Schmitendorf of Piedmont

Department Commander, Doug Feltman announced the time had arrived for the election of delegates and alternate delegates to the 104th Annual National American Legion Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. 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 those spring district meetings.

ELECTION OF DELEGATES AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES

Department Adjutant Hempel announced that South Dakota will be entitled to five at large Delegates as well as 16 additional Delegates to the 104th National Convention, for a total of 21 Delegates. Seven Delegates had been nominated at Spring District Meetings. The Department Commander, Adjutant, National Executive Committeeman, and immediate Past Department Commander are automatic delegates. At the 101st Department Convention, a resolution was approved for all national call-ins to be automatic Delegates, of which there are 10, leaving no vacancy to be filled this year as a Delegate at large.

The following Legionnaires were elected as Delegates to the 104th Annual National Convention of The American Legion in Charlotte, North Carolina; Brian Dean of Spearfish, Rick MacDonald of Hermosa, LeRoy Madsen of Pierre, Noel Cummins of Milbank, Annette Dunham of Iroquois, Linda Hessaa of Canton (Tea Post #266), Andy Lyngen of Garretson, PDC Paul Evenson of Sioux Falls (Garretson Post #23), Warren Aas of Watertown (Sisseton Post #50), PDC Terry Hanson of Arlington, PDC Jim Huls of Madison (Salem Post #140), PDC Larry Price of Redfield, PDC and Alt NEC Fred Nelson of Spearfish, Doug Harris of Rapid City Post #22, PDC Hugh Holmes of Mitchell, PDC Tim Jurgens of Milbank, Kevin Morello of Black Hawk (Piedmont Post #311), PDC and NEC Denny Brenden of Watertown. Immediate past Department Commander Doug Feltman of Chamberlain, Department Commander Courtney Steffen of Madison (Chester Post #136), and incoming Department Adjutant Chris Van Delist of Watertown (Rapid City #22) are all automatic delegates to the national convention.

Department Adjutant Hempel announced that there were 18 unfilled Alternate Delegate slots. Following nominations from the convention floor, the following Legionnaires were elected as Alternate Delegates for the National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina: Mike Pauling of Piedmont, Dale Hill of Sioux Falls Post #15, Kevin Hempel of Watertown (Chester Post #136), PDC Charemon Dunham of Iroquois, Ward Chapman of Milbank, Eugene Iron Shell of Rosebud, Dupree Chavez of Sioux Falls Post #15, John Bachmeier of Sioux Falls Post #15, Rod Smith of Chester, Jeff Hrabanek of Winner (Colome Post #146), Bill Peters of Sioux Falls Post #15, Marv Tisdall of Box Elder, Chris Rendon of Rapid City Post #320, and Kate Schmidt of Wessington Springs.

Department Commander Feltman opened nominations for Department Sergeant-at-Arms for 2023-2024.

Greg Geiman of Scotland, SD, (member of Wagner Post #11), was nominated by Rod Smith, Chester, and seconded by Tom Henley, Aurora, 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 2023-2024 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 District 1 and 2 caucus as their Department Vice Commander and that Rod Smith 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 Doug Feltman opened nominations for the office of Department Commander of The American Legion, Department of South Dakota.

Kevin Morello of Black Hawk, SD (Piedmont Post #311), was nominated for Department Commander by Regan McClurkin of Piedmont Post #311 and seconded by PDC Terry Hanson of Arlington, SD, and Gene Opbroek of Gregory, SD.

Courtney Steffen of Madison, SD (Chester Post #136) was nominated by PDC Paul Evenson of Sioux Falls, SD (Garretson Post #23) and seconded by Rod Smith of Chester, SD.

Subsequent calls for further nominations were unanswered and nominations were closed. State Adjutant Kevin Hempel called the roll for voting by the delegates. Following the completion of the vote tabulation, Department Commander Doug Feltman declared Courtney Steffen the winner. Commander Steffen was elected to serve as the Department Commander of The American Legion Department of South Dakota for the 2023-2024 American Legion year.

The newly elected officers were called to the stage and National Vice Commander Glenn Wahus conducted the Oath of Office installation ceremony. Annika, James & Kit VanZanten, Department Commander Steffen's children, presented her with her Department Commanders lapel pin. PDC Doug Feltman presented Department Commander Steffen with her white Department Commander's cap.

Newly installed Department Adjutant, C.P. Van Delist presented the newly elected Department Commander, Courtney Steffen, to the assembled delegates for her acceptance speech. Commander Steffen assumed the chair for the closing ceremonies and following the benediction and the retirement of the colors, declared the ONE-HUNDRED-FORTH ANNUAL CONVENTION of The American Legion, Department of South Dakota, adjourned.



**THE
AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**104th ANNUAL CONVENTION
Oacoma, South Dakota
June 8-11, 2023**

**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 2022 – 2023

Department Commander, Doug Feltman	Chamberlain
Department Vice Commander Doug Harris., (Districts 1-2).....	Rapid City
Department Vice Commander Courtney Steffen, (Districts 3-8).....	Madison
National Executive Committeeman, Denny Brenden	Watertown
Alternate Executive Committeeman, Fred Nelson	Spearfish
Adjutant, Kevin Hempel	Watertown
Department Service Officer, Courtney Steffen	Madison
Finance Officer, Krisma DeWitt	Watertown
Sergeant-at-Arms, Greg Geiman.....	Scotland
Judge Advocate, Jay Leibel	Madison
Chaplain, Tom Henley	Aurora
Historian, Fred Lee	Sioux Falls
Americanism, Larry Madsen.....	Gettysburg
Children & Youth, Harry Boner.....	Castlewood
Membership Chairman, Rod Smith.....	Chester

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: Jim Pekron	Mitchell
District 7: Patrick Mullen	Madison
District 8: Joe Knoer	Vermillion

LEGISLATIVE LOBBYISTS

Mike Mehlhaff	Pierre
C. P. 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, Buck Deweese	Spearfish
Hot Springs VA Medical Center, Angela Koch	Hot Springs

COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION CHAIRPERSONS

Aeronautics, Jon McDonald	Box Elder
Athletic, Dan Sudbeck	Dimock
Boys State, Chris Van Delist	Rapid City
Cemetery, Glenn Bahley	Box Elder
Educational Scholarship, Hugh Holmes	Mitchell
Employment, Greg Diaz	Spearfish
Internal Affairs, Byron Callies	Watertown
Legislative, C.P. Van Delist	Rapid City
Media & Communications, Courtney Steffen	Madison
Membership & Marketing, Rod Smith	Chester
National Security, Mark Mills	Custer
Public Safety, Larry Price	Redfield
Scouting, Fred Nelson	Rapid City
SDAL Foundation, Jim Kurtz	Garretton
Training, Jack French	Spearfish
Trust Fund, Randall Rakness	Watertown
VA&R, Warren Aas	Watertown
VAVS, Dan Wyatt	Madison

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION 31

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

June 30, 2023

See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	225,328
Certificates of deposit		132,000
Education loans receivable		120,507
Inventory		5,363
Total Current Assets		483,198

Other Assets

Marketable equity securities		653,264
Total Other Assets		653,264

Property and Equipment

Equipment		40,648
Vehicles		52,576
Leasehold improvements		3,320
Accumulated depreciation		(96,396)
Total Property and Equipment		148

Total Assets	\$	1,136,610
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LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

Dues & Payroll taxes payable	\$	2,106
Total Current Liabilities		2,106

Net Assets

With donor restrictions		198,700
Without donor restrictions		935,804
Total Net Assets		1,136,610

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	1,136,610
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THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

Year Ended June 30, 2023

See Independent Accountant's Compilation Report

	With Donor Restrictions	Without Donor Restrictions	Total
Revenues and Gains			
Membership dues	\$	\$ 227,650	\$ 227,650
Sales of merchandise		14,335	14,335
Donations	5,687	94,602	100,289
Interest and dividends	336	25,599	25,935
Realized loss on sale of investments		(5,631)	(5,631)
Unrealized gain on investments		24,677	24,677
Other	2,350	34,578	36,928
Net assets released from restrictions	(11,321)	11,321	
Total Revenues and Gains	(2,948)	427,131	424,183
Expenses			
Program services:			
Children and youth		2,065	2,065
Athletic commission		8,121	8,121
Oratory Fund		3,644	3,644
Label		29,084	29,084
Emblem - Cost of sales		13,193	13,193
Post 500		36,796	36,796
General support		250	250
		93,153	93,153
General and administrative		303,027	303,027
Total Expenses		396,180	396,180
Change in Net Assets	\$ (2,948)	\$ 30,951	\$ 28,003
Net Assets, Beginning	\$ 201,648	\$ 904,853	\$ 1,106,501
Change in net assets	(2,948)	30,951	28,003
Net Assets, Ending	\$ 198,700	\$ 935,804	\$ 1,134,504

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
June 30, 2023**

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
Current Assets								
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 147,135	\$ 20,591	\$ 21,296	\$ 5,895	\$ 500	\$ 9,666	\$ 20,245	\$ 225,328
Certificates of deposit	132,000	-	-	-	-	-	120,507	132,000
Education loans receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	120,507	120,507
Inventory	5,363	-	-	-	-	-	5,363	5,363
Total Current Assets	284,498	20,591	21,296	5,895	500	9,666	140,752	483,198
Other Assets								
Marketable equity securities	653,264	-	-	-	-	-	-	653,264
Total Other Assets	653,264	-	-	-	-	-	-	653,264
Property and Equipment								
Equipment	40,648	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,648
Vehicles	52,576	-	-	-	-	-	-	52,576
Leasehold improvements	3,320	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,320
Accumulated depreciation	(96,396)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(96,396)
Total Property and Equipment	148	-	-	-	-	-	-	148
Total Assets	\$ 937,910-	\$ 20,591	\$ 21,296	\$ 5,895	\$ 500	\$ 9,666	\$ 140,752	\$ 1,136,610
LIABILITIES								
Current Liabilities								
Dues & Payroll taxes payable	\$ 2,106	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,106
Total Current Liabilities	2,106	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,106
Net Assets								
With donor restrictions								
Without donor restrictions	935,804	20,591	21,296	5,895	500	9,666	140,752	198,700
	935,804	20,591	21,296	5,895	500	9,666	140,752	935,804
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 937,910	\$ 20,591	\$ 21,296	\$ 5,895	\$ 500	\$ 9,666	\$ 140,752	\$ 1,136,610

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

Year Ended June 30, 2023

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
Revenues and Support								
Membership dues	\$ 227,650	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 227,650
Sales of merchandise	14,335	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,335
Donations	94,602	2,282	-	-	-	3,405	-	100,289
Interest and dividends	25,599	19	23	5	-	11	278	25,935
Realized loss on investments	(5,631)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(5,631)
Unrealized gain on investments	24,677	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,677
Other	34,578	-	2,350	-	-	-	-	36,928
Net assets released from restrictions	11,321	-	(8,121)	100	-	(3,300)	-	-
Total Revenues and Gains	427,131	2,301	(5,748)	105	-	116	278	424,183
Expenses								
Program Services:								
Children and youth	2,065	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,065
Athletic commission	8,121	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,121
Oratory Expenses	3,644	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,644
Label	29,084	-	-	-	-	-	-	29,084
Emblem - Cost of sales	13,193	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,193
Post 500	36,796	-	-	-	-	-	-	36,796
General support	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	250
	93,153	-	-	-	-	-	-	93,153
General and administrative	303,027	-	-	-	-	-	-	303,027
Total Expenses	396,180	-	-	-	-	-	-	396,180
Change in Net Assets	\$ 30,951	\$ 2,301	\$ (5,748)	\$ 105	\$ -	\$ 116	\$ 278	\$ 28,003
Net Assets, Beginning	\$ 904,853	\$ 18,290	\$ 27,044	\$ 5,790	\$ 500	\$ 9,550	\$ 140,474	\$ 1,106,501
Change in net assets	30,951	2,301	(5,748)	105	-	116	278	28,003
Net Assets, Ending	\$ 935,804	\$ 20,591	\$ 21,296	\$ 5,895	\$ 500	\$ 9,666	\$ 140,752	\$ 1,134,504

**STATE COMMANDERS ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE LEGION MEMBERSHIP**

Greetings Legion Family,



I want to thank each and every Legion Family member for their support and confidence in me this past year. What a year it has been, it was the most rewarding experience I have ever had. To see what Posts from one end of the state to the other are doing for The Legion, veterans and their communities is amazing.

My term as Commander started on 19 June when I was sworn in. Then to Pierre for the Youth Trooper Academy, Parkston for the Viet Nam Traveling Memorial Wall, Milbank for the groundbreaking for the new baseball stadium, District Commander training, DEC meetings, Redfield baseball tournament where I was able to throw out the first pitch (and it even made it to home plate), Watertown for the SD Veterans Council meeting, my home coming, ALA President Smith's homecoming. I was also able to attend the Military Order of the Purple Heart banquet, DAV convention, tractor pulls, the Central Plains Regional baseball tournament, Bridge dedications, several membership nights, Post birthday celebrations, the Brown County Fair, the South Dakota State Fair, National Convention in Milwaukee, the Commanders conference in Washington DC, many city celebrations, The Legion Golf tournament, and Sons of The American Legion charter presentations. I traveled with the National Legion Auxiliary President and the Legion's National Commander when they visited South Dakota. The list goes on and on and to list all events would be way too long. I found it very hard to tell a Post, Unit, Squadron or Riders Chapter that I would not be able to attend their function because there were not enough days in the month to attend all of them.

However, the highlight of my term was when I was able to be on the South Dakota American Legion Honor Flight # 13 with my daughter Cindy, Unit # 15 Auxiliary member and my grandson Riley, Sons Squadron # 15 member. All three of us went as guardians and I know that we will never forget the humbling experience of getting to know our "veterans" and being a part of a very moving experience for them. Thanks to every member of the Legion family for working so hard in raising money so the flight could be named "The American Legion Honor Flight #13". Until you have been part of the flight you cannot imagine what it means to those veterans.

There is not another group of people as dedicated and committed to helping our veterans and strengthening our communities than the Legion family. Every day across South Dakota the "Legion family" is upholding our four pillars, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children and youth. I am extremely proud to have been your Commander this year and I can honestly say it went by too fast. I will end by asking that you give the next Department Commander the same support and commitment that you gave me to make The American Legion a better and stronger organization for our country, our veterans and our communities.

A very heartfelt THANK YOU to Adjutant Hempel, Judy and MaryJo for all of the help you gave me and for the way you keep Headquarters on an even keel and running smoothly. Also, a special thank you to the Vice Commanders and the District Commanders. Their support and dedication was greatly appreciated.

Thank you for trusting in me to be your Commander. And thank you for what you do for The American Legion.

God bless you, God bless America and God bless The American Legion.

Doug Feltman
Department Commander
2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Department Commander Feltman,

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.

All fall and spring District conventions were held this year, but weather forced the changing of original meeting dates for three of the district meetings. Most committees have met as required, some face to face, others by Zoom. A number of committees have held additional meetings by Zoom as a way to conduct additional business.

I feel the Department should take a hard look at our methodology for working on membership. Our membership numbers continue to decline, and we must find ways to entice younger members to join our organization as well as keep current members.

The Department continues to be a member of the South Dakota Veterans Council (SDVC) and was key to making their Legislative reception successful in January. The event was hosted at the Pierre Post home and was well received. I believe the SDVC will ask the Legion to host it again in 2024.

As decided by the Department Executive Committee, the Department went to an all-digital format for the South Dakota American Legion News. We have received feedback from a number of Legionnaires saying they would like to see some kind of paper be distributed. A subcommittee has been assigned the task of examining methods to continue to communicate with our Legionnaires and I think that will be important for the future membership health.

This year, the Department decided to conduct the MidWinter sweepstakes in-house. A local printing company did the printing and mailing with volunteers doing the stuffing and sealing of the envelopes. The sweepstakes were very successful, and the decision was made to do the same for the convention sweepstakes. It remains to be seen how successful this one will be. A special thanks to all the



volunteers that helped. One item learned from the MidWinter event is it takes more volunteers to get the job done in a single day.

The headquarters staff consists of the Department Adjutant, Judy Greenfield and MaryJo Boner. The Department Service Officer is currently an appointed, non-paid position currently held by Courtney Steffen. Judy and MaryJo continue to be the backbone of the office and many of the Department's programs and this office could not operate without them.

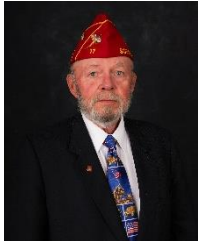
Lastly, family issues have led me to submit my resignation to the Department Executive Committee in February. I have enjoyed my time as the Department Adjutant and want to ensure a good turnover with the incoming Adjutant. A hiring committee appointed by Commander Feltman interviewed four individuals for the position and selected Christopher "Van" Van Delist as the new adjutant. He will officially join the Department in May and will assume the duties sometime in June once a formal turnover is complete. I wish him and the Department only the best of luck.

Since most of the committee/commission chairs and other Department Officers have submitted their reports which are available for review, this concludes my report.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Hempel
Department Adjutant

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN REPORT

From the NEC:



The year is really going fast and I'm enjoying being your National Executive Committeeman. At the Spring District Meetings this year, I've been discussing the issues that The American Legion has put forth as their priorities for the upcoming year. At the American Legion Legislative Conference in Washington D.C., we discussed the issues and Legionnaires from all over the country went to Capitol Hill Tuesday and discussed these issues with their congressional delegation. Wednesday morning, I had the honor of attending the National Commander's testimony before the joint Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committee. The National Commander did an excellent job representing The American Legion. **The legislative priorities for the upcoming year are Mental Health & Suicide Prevention, VA Healthcare Modernization, Implementation and Oversight of the Pact Act, Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors, Concurrent Receipt, Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity, GI Bill for Honorable Service, support our Afghan Allies, Military Quality of Life, Pay the Coast Guard and Protect the American Flag.**

The National Commander's program this year is the Veterans & Children Foundation. This foundation is used to fund the training for over 3,000 American Legion Service Officers. The American Legion service officers secured an estimated

\$14.25 billion in disability compensation and other benefits to veterans in 2020 alone. Also, funds are used for the temporary financial assistance program for veterans that are in need that have minor children at home. Funds from this fund have come into South Dakota to help veterans in our state who really needed help. The goal for South Dakota is \$30,728.26. To build this endowed fund up, all departments were asked to give 25 cents a year per member for six years or \$1.50. We have a little over 2 years left to make our goal and presently we are a little over halfway there. Please, if your Post is able, give a dollar per member to this fund. Send your Post donation to State Headquarters, National Headquarters, or the National Commander when he comes into the state.

Don't forget the Buddy Check Program. "Be the One" to prevent a veteran from committing suicide. I would like to close by saying thank you and your post for all you do for the American Legion. No matter how big or small, any thing you do makes a difference.

NEC Denny Brenden

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER REPORT

Mr. Commander,

I would like to thank Commander Doug Feltman for appointing me to serve as Department Service Officer for 2022-2023.

As Department Service Officer, I have the unique privilege of directly serving Veterans and their families in helping them obtain and utilize the benefits they have earned through service to our country. The VA is undoubtedly its own mountain to climb, and I am happy to be a guide of sorts.

It has been a big year for benefits in the VA world. In August 2022 the PACT Act was passed, a sweeping piece of legislation that covers multiple generations of Veterans. For Gulf War-era and Post 9/11 Veterans who served in the Middle East or the airspace above, the following cancers and illnesses are now presumptive: Brain cancer, Gastrointestinal cancer of any type, Glioblastoma, Head cancer of any type, Kidney cancer, Lymphatic cancer of any type, Lymphoma of any type, Melanoma, Neck cancer of any type, Pancreatic cancer, Reproductive cancer of any type, Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type, Asthma that was diagnosed after service, Chronic bronchitis, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Chronic rhinitis, Chronic sinusitis, Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis, Emphysema, Granulomatous disease, Interstitial lung disease (ILD), Pleuritis, Pulmonary fibrosis, and Sarcoidosis.

For Vietnam Veterans, the presumptive list for Agent Orange exposure now includes MGUS (blood disease) and Hypertension. Additionally, the PACT Act expanded the presumptive locations to include Any U.S. or Royal Thai military base in Thailand from January 9, 1962, through June 30, 1976; Laos from December 1, 1965, through September 30, 1969; Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham



Province from April 16, 1969, through April 30, 1969; Guam or American Samoa or in the territorial waters off of Guam or American Samoa from January 9, 1962, through July 30, 1980; and Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from January 1, 1972, through September 30, 1977.

On January 17, 2023, funding starting for the COMPACT Act, a bill that passed in 2020 that allows Veterans in suicidal crisis to go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care regardless of their enrollment in the VA system. This is a huge benefit and will help in our fight against Veteran Suicide.

I am thrilled to report that State, County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers around South Dakota utilizing the American Legion Power of Attorney have secured \$42,545,265 in VA benefits for South Dakota Veterans and their families in Fiscal Year 2022. If you have not thanked your local Veterans Service Officer lately, please do so!

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Steffen
Department Service Officer

AMERICANISM COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commander Feltman,

I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve as your South Dakota American Legion Americanism Chairman. I attended the National Americanism Conference in Indianapolis in September. State representatives shared their successes and concerns.

The American Legion Scholarship Program – An Oratorical contest (open to students grades 9 thru 12 enrolled in public, parochial, military, private or state accredited home school) started at the Post level in December. High school students throughout the state prepared speeches based on the United States of America Constitution in a friendly cordial competition. Thank you also to the members of the Americanism Commission, District Americanism Chairmen and the entire American Legion family helping. The assistance of well-versed Legionnaires is always helpful.

Five Districts were represented in the Department Oratorical Contest. Thank you, Huron American Legion Post and District #6, for coordinating most of the personnel needs for the Department finals at Crossroads on February 12th during the Midwinter Conference. Some schools do not include the American Legion Oratorical program in their curriculum. I encourage Legionnaires in those to look to individuals or organizations to sponsor a local contest. Potential contacts might be a librarian, a minister, an attorney, a toastmasters club, or a “Dale Carnegie” group.

Americanism programs are a very public opportunity for the American Legion. We touch the lives of families through youth. Our programs encourage



young people to learn more about our form of government. Americanism is one of the 4 basis pillars of The American Legion. It is centered in patriotism.

The American Legion Americanism program represents much of what Posts do in their communities such as sponsoring Boys Scout Troops, sponsoring Shooting Sports programs, sponsoring American Legion Baseball teams, supporting a statewide Youth Trooper Academy, teaching flag etiquette, conducting Oratorical contests, sponsoring Boys State delegates, Memorial Day programs, Veteran's Day program, flag disposal ceremonies, sponsoring a color guard to lead parades and providing an honor guard at a veteran's funeral. We encourage citizens to vote in elections.

As you prepare your Post annual Americanism report, prepare your program goals for next year. Contact your school officials this spring and schedule appointments on the school calendar for next year (teachers' reception, oratorical competition, classroom flag etiquette presentations).

Thank you, Commander Feltman, for giving me the opportunity to represent the Department of South Dakota as Americanism Chairman. Thank you to the Americanism Commission and the South Dakota members of the National Americanism Council for their direction and support.

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Madsen,
Americanism Commission Chairman

ATHLETIC COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORT

Commander Feltman,

My report begins with the start of the 2023 baseball season. Jan 1st begins the start of a new baseball season with all teams completing registration by May 15th. Hopefully we will have another successful season as we did last year with a record number of teams being registered in 2022.

Tournament sites for 2023 are as follows: State A Sr Tournament to be held in Yankton from July 25th thru July 29th; St B Sr Tournament to be held in Redfield from July 28th thru Aug 1st; St A Jr Tournament to be held in Harrisburg from July 27th thru July 30th and the St B Jr Tournament to be held in Lennox from Aug 4th thru Aug 6th. This years' Golf Tournament will be hosted by Hermosa at 2 different locations in the Rapid City area. Everything is all arranged and looks to be on schedule.

On Jan 29th of this year, we made selections for the 2024 tournament host sites. They are as follows: St A Sr will be hosted in Mitchell; St B Sr will be hosted in Salem; St A Jr will be hosted in Pierre and the St B Jr will be hosted in Groton. No selection for the Golf tournament yet for next year. If interested in hosting the Golf tournament, please contact Elton Blemaster or Gene Gillen.



Just a note on hosting any of our tournaments. We need our Posts to get involved with our parent groups when hosting any of our tournaments. Last year we had 2 tournament sites that the Posts would not sign contracts for hosting the tournaments. Reasons for not signing were, did not know we were hosting a tournament, worried about insurance liabilities or worried about their financial obligations. To address some of concerns are that when a team purchases their team's insurance a 2 million liability is included with your team's accidental insurance, that should cover any issues that might occur. As far as financial concerns, in my 20 years of running this program a post has never lost a dime, in fact last year one of the Posts not wanting to sign a contract lost out on a percentage of a \$13,000 net gate that the parent group took in and I think would have been willing to share with post at some percentage with a little support. Please get involved or get your Sons of A.L. involved if you have one, if not this would be a great reason to get one started.

What's new for 2023? We were supposedly changing our branding label, which meant new uniform patch or logos. We were supposedly getting new baseball patches for all our uniforms that would have been required by 2024. But that has again changed because of the limited supply of the new patches available. So, for teams purchasing new uniforms this year you will once again be required to use our already existing patch until further notice. I think will solve our current Branding issue until further notice and further research can be completed.

One more thing to bring up is that the SDHSAA is considering sanctioning baseball as a High School sport. As of now nothing has been confirmed yet, but it is coming. My only concern is that we don't want them to extend that season into June. That would totally ruin our season and program. Currently their tournaments end on Memorial Day weekend which works great with our program, and I do support. For years they have done it that way and it has been working just fine. I think they are maybe pushing for a bit longer season as I also would have liked to start our season in May instead of June like we currently do. I am scheduled to meet with the SDHSAA after the Basketball season. Please let your AD know that we support their program, but it cannot go into June for their tournament play. Thank You!

Commander Feltman that concludes my mid-winter report and on behalf of the Athletic Commission, I would like to thank you for all your help and support by letting us serve on the Commission.

Sincerely,
Dan Sudbeck, Chairman

ATHLETIC COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance, 5-1-22		\$20,213.93
RECEIPTS:		
Entry Fees	\$7,600.00	
Interest	<u>\$ 23.15</u>	
	\$7,623.15	<u>\$ 7,623.15</u>
TOTAL		\$27,837.08

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:

Commission Expenses	<u>\$7,610.92</u>	
TOTAL	<u>\$7,610.92</u>	<u>\$ 7,610.92</u>
Balance, 5-1-23		\$20,226.16

BOYS STATE DIRECTOR REPORT

Commander,

It is with great pleasure I can report we are a GO for the 80th Session of South Dakota American Legion Boys State, May 29 – June 2, 2023, at Northern State University.

We currently have 168 boys signed up; we are down over 100 registrations at this time from 2019 but at sustained level from 2022. Again, this year we decided to include seniors in the session to allow them an opportunity.

We will hold our annual meeting for the corporation the Sunday before Boys State, May 28th at Northern State University. Some agenda items are future incorporation of Seniors, Changes to the Bylaws to change annual meeting date, 2024 Session Dates, and election of officers including a new Director and Registrar.



I would like to 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
South Dakota American Legion Boys State Director

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Commander Feltman,

The South Dakota American Legion C&Y (Children and Youth) program this past year was a quiet one but a rewarding one. Thank you for selecting me as the Children and Youth Chairman for the Department of South Dakota. Your leadership and willingness to direct my efforts for the year were greatly appreciated.

In the past several years, the C&Y program within SD has worked closely with the Dollar Tree Program, in association with Operation Homefront. This last year, the



South Dakota National Guard, took the primary lead on collecting and distributing donations of school supplies for helping those young Veterans families with children at home. The same process was repeated in early December as the Dollar Tree once again collected donations of small toys for distribution to Veterans families. There were a few Dollar Tree stores that did not have a National Guard Armory associated to it to make the donation pickups so local Legion Posts were able to pick up those donations and distribute them within their local communities. In December, with the help of the Brookings and Sisseton Posts, I was also able to pick up donations from 2 other Dollar trees, package gifts into 20 gift bags, and deliver them to the VA in Sioux Falls for distribution to Veterans with children. This is a great program that I hope the American Legion will continue to be a part of.

Additionally, Operation Homefront donated backpacks full of school supplies to Air Force personnel with children at Ellsworth AFB. Around 15 Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and Legion Rider members from Districts one and two, on short notice, volunteered to help distribute 340 of these backpacks on July 30th. It was great to see so many step up to help make this event such a success.

Operation Homefront will continue to offer the school supply, backpack, and toy programs in the coming years. On a side note, through my interaction with Operation Homefront with the Backpack distribution and Dollar tree programs, I have been asked to become a member of the Operation Homefront Advisory Council, to represent the State of South Dakota in the upper Midwest region. I hope to continue to work with future C&Y Chairman of the American Legion, Department of South Dakota, on many more collaboration projects together between the two organizations. A program that I wanted to promote this year as the C&Y Chairman was a donation fund raiser with proceeds to be split between the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) of South Dakota and youth programs in the South Dakota American Legion, which includes TFA.

Children's Miracle Network helps South Dakota families with sick or injured children with: Specialized equipment needs for the Sanford Children's Hospital, Child Life Specialists to help teach our children about their illness, Travel assistance, Food Vouchers, and Lodging

Veterans with children at home can file for TFA (Temporary Financial Assistance), in times of need to help cover some the immediate needs of the Veterans family. Veterans can apply for assistance through their local American Legion Post. Early in the year, there was a request to use the TFA program, however at the time, the criteria for using the program were not met because of the situation at the time. Unknow to me, there was an update to eligibility for TFA in the past year that could have been explored.

The American Legion passed Resolution No. 5 (May 2022) Titled: Policy and Procedures of the Temporary Financial Assistance Grant Program. The policy clearly states that the minor child must be living full-time in the home of a qualifying veteran or service member. The minor child qualifies if they fall into one of the below categories. Yes, the veteran (grandparent) could qualify for TFA if the minor child(ren) is living in the veteran's home full-time and is under the veteran's legal

guardianship or has been adopted by the veteran. The child is: a biological child of the veteran or service member, a child legally adopted by the veteran or service member, a stepchild by marriage of the veteran or service member, a child who is under the legal guardianship of a veteran or service member. I have attached a link to the resolution here. <https://archive.legion.org/node/7887>.

Posts, Units, SAL or Rider groups that have or are still collecting funds for the Children Miracle Network/State Youth Activity fund, please memo your check as CMN/C&Y and either mail them to state HQ or present them at the State Convention this year. Once a total of donations is determined a check will be presented to CMN of SD later this summer.

Again, I wanted to thank you for selecting me as your state C&Y Chairman for the 2022-2023 Legion year. It has been a great year working with you. Thank you for your direction and mentorship. I wish you all the best in the coming years!!

Respectfully Submitted,
Harry Boner, Chairman

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance, 5-1-22		\$18,285.57
Memorial/Donations	\$ 863.00	
Interest	<u>18.40</u>	
TOTAL	\$ 881.40	<u>\$ 881.40</u>
		\$19,166.97
DISBURSEMENTS:		
TFAs	\$-----	
TOTAL	\$-----	<u>\$ -----</u>
BALANCE, 5-1-23		\$19,166.97

**EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Mr. Commander,

Two thousand twenty-two/twenty-three was a lackluster period for the Educational Scholarship Committee. In 2019, we changed from a loan concept to a scholarship format investing \$120,000.00 with the South Dakota Community Foundation.

Our beginning fund balance (1/1/2022) was \$145,496.84 and ending fund balance (12/31/2022) was \$123,309.68. A loss of \$22,187.16. In the account at State HQ, we have \$20,239.51.

We received zero donations in 2022.



Five applications were received for this year's scholarships. Recipients are Samantha Peppel, Chamberlain; Allison Gross, Brookings; Ela Peterson, Huron; and Mayer Matthies, Sioux Falls. Congratulations!

Applications and brochures are online at www.SDlegion.org. We are currently revising the application for 2023/24 scholarship year.

The 2023 Educator of the Year is Carlene Burke, Creekside Elementary School, Spearfish School District. She was nominated by Spearfish Post 164.

The education scholarships offered by the Department of South Dakota are for children of veterans, grandchildren of veterans, and veterans who meet the requirements as set forth in the Education Scholarship brochure attending post-secondary education, college, or technical schools. 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 is 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 Michael Pauling, Piedmont, Philip Egeberg, Brookings, and Hugh Holmes, Mitchell.

Mr. Commander, thank you for selecting me as chairman of the prestigious Education Scholarship Committee. It is a great honor. Charlie Brown did win one game in his cartoon career!

Respectfully Submitted,
Hugh W. Holmes
Chairman, Education Scholarship Committee

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Balance, 5-1-22		\$18,461.55
RECEIPTS:		
Loan Repayments	\$ 1,758.75	
Interest	\$ 24.26	
Memorials and Donations	<u>\$ -----</u>	
	\$ 1,783.01	\$ 1,783.01
TOTAL		
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Scholarships	<u>\$ -----</u>	
TOTAL	<u>\$ -----</u>	<u>\$ -----</u>
Balance, 5-1-23		\$20,244.56

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. Recognizing organizations that provide opportunities for our fellow veterans is an important part of who we are as a Legion. This is particularly true regarding employers.

As Legionnaires, we have a responsibility to advocate the employment and retention of veterans. Here in South Dakota, we are fortunate to have many great employers, who recognize that veterans bring unique skills to the workforce, have received quality training throughout their time in the military, and typically demonstrate outstanding leadership abilities. A strong work ethic comes naturally to them, and they possess integrity and discipline - characteristics and values that seem to be in short supply these days, yet are common among veterans. Employers who are a head above the others recognize these qualities, and go the extra mile to recruit veterans that exhibit these traits. The annual Employment Awards showcase some of the great organizations that support veterans, and enable us to recognize them for their contributions.

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 4th consecutive year each committee member volunteered to serve, and I would like to thank each of the members for their contributions.

As I have in the past, I would like to ask again for the assistance of all posts to look closely at deserving organizations in their area. We received two great nominations this year, but there are so many other great employers in our great state. Please take the time to recognize them for their contributions. I am happy to assist posts in preparing nomination packages. Thank you for your help in this important endeavor.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory K. Dias, Chairman

SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION REPORT

Commander,

Your South Dakota American Legion Foundation began in 2010, because of the foresight of our leaders at the time, in believing that it is important to have a steady source of revenue to help support the many valuable programs of the American Legion. It is structured as a 501(C)(3) non-profit corporation, so that the donations to it can be tax deductible for the donor. The funds are professionally managed by



the South Dakota Community Foundation. As they accumulate, the donations to the Foundation go into an endowed fund that is invested. It is the return on these investments that becomes available to the SD American Legion to support the programs. In this way, the endowed fund itself is not depleted, and the returns on the investments will continue forever.

The Foundation works! The present balance is approximately \$275,000. Approximately \$10,000 per year is available back to the Legion for its programs. In recent years, Grants have been made to the following: The SD American Legion's Children and Youth program; SD Boys State; Midwest Honor Flight; The SD American Legion's Youth Trooper Academy program; and The National Veterans and Children's Fund. At the present time, funds are available for more granting.

Donations can be in many forms such as: outright gifts of cash or property; bequests through your estate by naming the SD AL Foundation in your will; memorials in memory of friends and fellow veterans and Legion members who have passed on so that their legacy will continue to live forever; naming the SD AL Foundation as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy so it will pay out upon your death; as an IRS approved "IRA Charitable Rollover Gift" so that your distribution is paid directly to the Foundation, rather than become taxable income to you. All of these gifts help assure that the American Legion programs that you care about will continue to be supported forever. Gifts of \$10,000 or more by an individual, entitle the donor to name the specific Legion program that he/she wishes to support. Please let the Foundation know if you would like assistance in structuring a donation.

Thank you to all of the individuals, Legion Posts, veterans' organizations (within and outside of the Legion Family) and businesses who have made donations to the Foundation! Many Posts and individuals regularly give memorials to honor friends, fellow veterans and Legion members who have passed on. If your Post is one of those, thank you very much! If not, please consider it as a way to ensure that their legacy will continue to live on forever. Many Posts have made significant donations to the Foundation. Thank you very much! If it has been some time since your Post has donated to the Foundation, please discuss the possibility of a donation to the Foundation with your membership. Your contribution will assist the S.D. American Legion forever. Thank you for your consideration!

We also want to thank you for your participation in Foundation fund raising activities. Over the years we have had several raffles that have been well supported and important income sources. Thank you for purchasing tickets, and congratulations to the winners! Following the Department Convention, we plan to kick off a new raffle that we feel will have prizes of broad interest to all, at a modest ticket price. More details to come. Another important fund raiser has been the Fun Auction held at the Department Convention each June. We thank those who donate the items, and those who bid on and purchase the items. Thank you to all! It really is a fun event, with quality items offered for sale! Thank you for donating the quality items, for without them, this event would not happen. Please plan to join in the fun coming up in June!

The Foundation Board members serve staggered terms at the appointment of the Department Commander. Thank you, Mr. Commander, for the privilege to serve!

Jim Kurtz, Chairman,
Board of Directors

DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN REPORT

Commander Feltman,

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 for the State Convention this year.

Post Historians should be working on their Post Histories right now for the History contest at our State Convention in Oacoma. 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.

All the information on guidance and points sheets used in judging History books entered in the contest can be found in the Officers Guide.

Our History Book contest is patterned after the national contest, using the point system in judging the winners in each category. The rules were put together to make the history books better, ie. page numbers, id pictures, chronological structure, 3x5 card identifying author, table of contents, etc. The rules are available to everyone in the Officers Guide. On the points sheet, it only gives the general topic with details in the written area of the guide before the score sheet. The intent of the score sheet is to make history books look better.

Certificates will be presented to the first, second and third place winners at our State Convention.

I encourage all post historians to put together a post history. Your Post members will appreciate your hard work in the years to come. I thank all Post historians for their hard work and commitment in preparing these reports.

All Post Histories must be turned in by Friday, June 9th by 1 pm at the Registration Desk. If you can get them to me sooner, that would be great.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Lee, Department Historian



**INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
CHAIRMAN REPORT**

Fellow Legionnaires,



As this year's Chairman of the Internal Affairs (IA) Commission, I would, first of all, like to thank Commander Feltman for appointing me. The Internal Affairs Commission is very instrumental in guiding the internal operation of the SD American Legion. In addition, the Commission has purview of the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Riders. Members include Chairman Callies, along with members PDC Hanson, PDC Jurgens, and PDC Weinmann, along with ad hoc members Adjutant Hempel and Judge

Advocate Leibel.

The IA Commission met via Zoom on May 4, 2023, at 1900 hours, with all members present. Guests included Alternate NEC Nelson representing the American Legion Riders and Casey Hanson, representing the Sons of the American Legion. Commander Feltman thanked the members of the Commission for being active members and for participating in the Zoom meeting. Chairman Callies informed the group that there is no written job description for the Commission and he and the Adjutant will be working together to propose a job description.

SAL Commander Hanson gave a short report on the SAL. He is very happy as to the events of the year and reported that there are 41 active squadrons in the Department and has a membership of 1,534, 112% of the Department's goal. Alternate NEC Nelson gave a very informative report on the American Legion Riders and their activities in the State. He reported that there are normally two meetings of the ALR during the year, one at midwinter and one at Department Convention. This year, rather than at the convention, the Riders will hold their meeting in Pierre the weekend before Memorial Day. This is in conjunction with the Third Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors War Monument.

Four resolutions were submitted as follows: 23-1, a resolution defining as to how the Legionnaire of the Year should be selected, and was voted to send it back to the post for further revision; 23-2 regarded implementing an EMT award in addition other awards and was voted to send to Finance Committee for review; 23-3 and 23-4 both concerned Veterans and how some benefits were defined and that SD support legislation to revise some issues in Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations, both were sent to the VA&R Convention Committee.

There were no resolutions concerning the changing of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Respectfully submitted,
Byron Callies, Chairman,
Internal Affairs Commission

LEGION RIDERS REPORT

Commander Feltman,

Serving as the Department Commander's "American Legion Riders Liaison" has been an honor this past year. The American Legion Riders are one of the most visible and popular programs of the American Legion. The chapters of the American Legion Riders' strength come from their efforts at the post level, where its members manage the chapters. The uniqueness of this program resides in its membership, which includes Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion.



The American Legion Riders guide their activities around the American Legion Four Pillars: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation; National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.

Chapters support the first pillar, **Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**. The Chapters provide final respects to Veterans with escorts and flag lines at funeral homes, churches, and cemeteries, many at the Black Hills National Cemetery. Chapters reported participating in homecoming parades, parades of lights, Fourth of July, and city parades. Four times a year at the Black Hills National Cemetery, American Legion Riders join other veteran organizations and supporters in helping to provide unaccompanied veterans an honorable service.

Chapters supported veterans in VA facilities through programs such as Christmas in July, National Salute to Veterans Week, Veterans' Day, the Four Chaplains Memorial Service, Valentine's Day, Christmas Gift Shop, parties, bingo, and ice cream socials, to name a few.

Chapters support Veterans in the community by conducting Veterans Day programs, a poker run for Suicide Awareness, socials and picnics, decorating veterans' graves for Memorial Day, placing Holiday Remembrance Wreaths and helping with Wreath Across America at the Black Hills National Cemetery and State Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls. The Riders also help preparing the "Avenue of Flags" at the Black Hills National Cemetery. In addition, they lead the Black Hills State University Jacket Ride that raises funds for veterans' scholarships.

To support the second pillar, **National Security**, one of the main focuses is to promote full accountability of the POW/MIAs through community and youth awareness. The chapters reported performing several POW/MIA Ceremonies of Remembrance at conventions, dinners, and schools. Riders also support the troops by providing escorts, flag lines, and sending care packages. Riders assisted with the "We've Got Your Six Veterans Appreciation Fair" in the Northern Black Hills. This year, the Black Hills Riders Chapter #164 planned and held the Colonel Mike Kain Memorial Blood Drive which surpassed its goal.

Americanism is the third pillar. Two main events and programs highlight the impact of the riders. The first step is to educate our youth, resulting in Flag Protection awareness. An annual flag etiquette program by Black Hills Chapter #164 touched 180 first graders in Spearfish; 140 kindergarteners in Belle Fourche, and 30

preschoolers in Sturgis. All chapters reported, planned, and organized poker runs to raise funds for the signature program of the American Legion Riders.

As for the fourth pillar, **Children & Youth**, the American Legion Riders are known in many communities for their volunteerism and service. Some of the most common and regular activities are fish fries, bingo, color guards at community functions, and visiting veterans in hospitals and residential facilities. Other community-based projects are annual events such as sponsoring bands in the park free of charge to the public, participating in community chili cook-offs to support adults with disabilities, and posting colors at the Relay for Life event. Rapid City Chapter #22 adopted a first-grade classroom in Sturgis and conducted monthly activities with the students. Rieck-Morgan Warner Chapter #137 holds a Teddy Bear Ride to collect plush bears to distribute to children while going to hospitals in the Aberdeen area. The Ft. Pierre Chapter #20 held their first fundraiser to support Sleep Heavenly Peace to build beds.

The Riders come together to support their community, the veterans, and military service members, sharing a common love of motorcycles. The American Legion Riders is growing in membership and chapters; this past year, Ft. Pierre Post 20 started a Chapter, bringing our total to 13 chapters.

There are two statewide Riders' meeting. One take place during the Midwinter Conference and the second one usually during the State Convention. To allow to bring the Chapters together and provide a time to ride, this year the Statewide Riders meeting will be held in Pierre the weekend before Memorial Day in conjunction with the Third Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors War Monument.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all South Dakota American Legion Riders members for their dedication and hard work in serving their communities and advocating for veterans. We are looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Nelson
Liaison, American Legion Riders

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT



It was an honor to serve as Chairman of The American Legion Department of South Dakota Legislative Committee for the 2023 legislative session. The members of the committee are Chairman C.P. Van Delist, Kevin Morello, PDC Rod Martens, Dan Fritz and Mike Mehlhaff. The lobbyists for this year were C.P. Van Delist, Adjutant Kevin Hempel, and Mike Mehlhaff.

On January 24, 2023, the committee held a Zoom meeting to review bills and discuss those of concern to The American Legion Department of South Dakota. The priorities were set, and the committee agreed on which bills we were going to watch, lobby for and lobby against.

The Legislative Committee met in person on February 7, 2023, at Post 8 to review the session up to that time and adjust priorities as necessary. Roll call showed the following committee members present: Department Commander Doug Feltman, Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel, Chairman C.P. Van Delist Mike Mehlhaff and Kevin Morello. That evening Post 8 hosted a Legislative reception with all Legislators invited. This reception gave all in attendance an opportunity to discuss legislative items and issues that impact on Veterans. Special thank you to Post 8, as always, they were an amazing host.

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

Bills Actively Lobbied For:

HB 1039 to revise certain provisions regarding the payment of tuition for members of the South Dakota National Guard.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 16, 2023

HB 1045 to increase the basic salary schedule for county veterans' service officers.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 16, 2023

HB 1046 to provide free tuition at Board of Technical Education institutions for children or spouses of members of the South Dakota National Guard disabled or deceased in the line of duty.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 02, 2023

HB 1196 make an appropriation for improving the buildings and grounds of the capitol complex and declare an emergency.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 09, 2023

HB 1038 revise certain provisions pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs and residency in the State Veterans Home.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

HB 1051 require counties to hire veteran service officers in proportion to the number of veterans residing in the county.

01/23/2023 House Military and Veterans Affairs Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 10, NAYS 2.

HB 1052 change the eligibility requirements of a property tax relief program for disabled veterans and surviving spouses.

01/19/2023 House Taxation Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 9, NAYS 4.

HB 1151 create the South Dakota paid family leave program.

02/16/2023 House Committee on Appropriations Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 9, NAYS 0.

Bills Watched by the Committee

HB 1047 revise certain provisions regarding military affairs.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

HB 1048 repeal and make technical changes to provisions regarding the Board of Military Affairs.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

HB 1054 provide a stipend for the erection of a private headstone for a deceased veteran.

Signed by the Governor on Monday, February 27, 2023

SB 12 authorize the construction of a National Guard vehicle maintenance shop in Watertown, to make an appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

SB 13 authorize the construction of an addition to the BG Dean Mann Readiness Center in Sioux Falls, to make an appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

SB 14 revise the legal description for the construction of a National Guard Readiness Center in Sioux Falls, make an additional appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

SB 15 to accept Uniformed Services ID as proof of veteran status to have veteran designation added to a state license or ID card.

Signed by the Governor on Wednesday, February 22, 2023

HB 1065 increase the maximum amount of dollars payable by the state to erect the headstone of a deceased veteran.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 16, 2023

SB 1 modify debilitating medical conditions for medical cannabis use.

Signed by the Governor on Thursday, March 23, 2023

SC 807 Honoring Nyapal Chuol of Sioux Falls, South Dakota Girls State Governor, and Jason Lenning of Harrisburg, South Dakota Boys State Governor, and commending the South Dakota American Legion and Auxiliary for their sponsorship and coordination of the Girls State and Boys State programs.

02/09/2023 Enrolled

SC 801 Honoring the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Singing Legionnaires of American Legion Post 15 in Sioux Falls.

01/19/2023 Enrolled

HC 8005 Commending the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing for being awarded the Distinguished Flying Unit Plaque, the William W. Spruance Safety Award, the Winston P. Wilson Trophy, and the Major General John J. Pesch Flight Safety Trophy in training year 2022.

02/02/2023 Enrolled

SB 186 provide free tuition for a resident whose parent died while on active duty in the United States armed forces.

2/13/2023 [Senate Military and Veterans Affairs](#) Tabled, Passed, [YEAS 5,](#)

[NAYS 0.](#)

HB 1190 make an appropriation to provide a grant for the construction of a military heritage museum in Sioux Falls and declare an emergency.

2/23/2023 [Joint Committee on Appropriations](#) Tabled, Passed, [YEAS 15,](#)

[NAYS 3.](#)

HB 1037 amend the eligibility for admission to the state veterans home and repeal the residency requirement.

02/01/2023 Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed,

SB 127 revise the eligible disability level for veterans to receive state park benefits.

02/07/2023 Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 3, NAYS 2.

HCR 6003 Encouraging the Executive Board of the Legislature to authorize the interim legislative study of long-term care services for veterans regardless of disability ratings and to develop long-term care plans for VA-operated purchased and subsidized long-term care services.

02/13/2023 Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 4, NAYS 1.

Bills the Committee Lobbied Against

HB 1130 require an official declaration of war or other Congressional action before the South Dakota National Guard may be deployed outside of the state.

01/30/2023 House Military and Veterans Affairs Deferred to the 41st legislative day, Passed, YEAS 9, NAYS 2.

If anyone wants more information on a particular bill listed above, please contact me at (605) 210-0408 or cvandelist@gmail.com.

Thank you Commander Feltman for this great opportunity to serve as Chairman for the Legislative Committee. As well, thank you to all the members of the committee who worked so hard to make this a highly successful year in the legislature for Veteran and Military related items.

Most Respectfully Submitted,
C.P. Van Delist
Legislative Committee Chairman

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

No Report Submitted

MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Department Commander Feltman

The membership came in strong until mid-December. We have been off our pace until Easter, and it is now picking up again, but we have a long way to go to get back on track. Currently we stand at 15,502 or 90.97%. The last two weeks have been good but not enough to get us to the 95% goal. There are currently 77 posts at or above goal with many of them being over 100%.

The Membership team and District Commanders have been working hard contacting post and those whose membership has expired, and they have had some success with the renewals. I owe them my gratitude for working hard to help keep our South Dakota Department strong and working toward National Commander Troiola's 103% goal.



I attended the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and talked to a lot of veterans and signed one past member up again. Another veteran moved from TX to Sturgis for work and wanted to transfer his membership but wanted to find his card and talk to

the local post to make the transfer. Other than that, it was just planting seeds and hoping they would grow into members.

The membership table, banners and materials were used at many places around the state. The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and the I Got Your 6 event which is open to all veterans. The South Dakota State Fair, the Brown County Fair and Irene’s first ever Christmas Fair. I know the other two sets were also used at other events to help get the word out.

We have encouraged all post to call, text, write or make personal visits to those members who have not renewed and explain what The American Legion does for all veterans.

At this writing we are at 90.97% and need 1,538 new and renewals for the Department to reach 100%. It is achievable but there are some rural post where there are no veterans to recruit to replace those who have reported to Post Everlasting. This was discussed on our last regional zoom meeting with all departments present expressing the same they had the same problems and our national representative telling us this has been discussed for several years with no solution so far.

Thank you, Commander, for this opportunity to serve as your Membership Chairman. I also want to thank the Membership Committee, Adjutant Hempel, Judy, Mary Jo and all who have worked hard to achieve that 100% or more goal. The District Commanders have work hard to encourage each Post to all members to be a recruiter because this is their American Legion.

Respectfully Submitted
Rodney Smith
Department Membership Chairman

MEMBERSHIP FUND

Budget Amount 2022-2023	\$ 5,500.00
Membership award from National	\$ -----
TOTAL	\$ 5,500.00
DISBURSEMENTS:	
Committee, Travel & Awards	<u>\$2,055.85</u>
Balance in Fund, 5-1-23	\$3,444.15

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

Commander,

Your SDAL Public Safety Committee had another very good year. It all started with the South Dakota Youth Trooper Academy followed by the selections of the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award and the Firefighter of the Year Award winners.

2022 South Dakota Youth Trooper Academy:

We had 23 outstanding young people attend the weeklong academy held at the Law Enforcement Training Center



in Pierre. We had one very late cancelation due to a medical issue and didn't have time to pick an alternate.

Again the South Dakota Highway Patrol did an outstanding job of hosting the event. Ten State Troopers volunteer to be away from their duty stations and families all week to serve as instructors and mentors to our recruits.

The logistics of organizing and conducting this program are challenging but Lt. Maunu and Sgt. Schoenfeld do a fantastic job. The recruits not only learn about the duties of the SDHP but they are also exposed to other Law Enforcement Agencies.

This year, the South Dakota American Legion presented our Outstanding Graduate Scholarship to Jaydon Schmalz from Clear Lake. Jaydon is currently a senior and plans to attend Dakota State University and major in cyber security.

Over 30 of our Youth Trooper graduates are currently in Law Enforcement agencies across the state. I believe there are about a dozen who are State Troopers and several others are serving in the military.

This year we had a very good turnout for our "Blue Cap Day" when Legionnaires and guests visited the Academy. This is always a fun day for the recruits and for the Legionnaires as well.

The 2023 Academy will be held the week of 26-30 June. We would like to invite Legionnaires from across the State to come visit the academy on May 29th for a fun day and Legion Cookout.

Your SDAL Public Safety Committee would like to thank everyone in the Legion family for supporting this outstanding program. Your continued support will ensure the future success of the program.

One last thing, we are going to miss Lt. Tony Maunu as he will be retiring before this year's Academy. Tony has been with the program practically since we started. His leadership and mentorship has been crucial to the success of the SDYTA. Thank you, Lt. Maunu, and enjoy your, well deserved, retirement.

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award:

Again, this year, we had a few applications for Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. All of those recommended are very deserving of recognition. As a reminder, when we select the winner, it is important that the sponsoring Legion Post makes sure to follow the criteria and instructions. We forward the State winner to the National competition. When National judges them, if there is anything missing with the application, they will not be considered.

This year's recipient of the "Law Enforcement Officer of the Year" Award is Deputy Sheriff Thomas Mossman from Rapid City. Thomas's nomination comes from Rapid City Post 22. Officer Mossman will be invited to the Department convention for the award presentation. Congratulations Deputy Mossman.

Firefighter of the Year Award:

This year we judged several applications for the "Firefighter of the Year Award". Again, it is important that the applications contain all of the required information, or they cannot be considered.

These National programs were established, by resolution, to recognize outstanding first responders from across the country. **"It's what we do"!!**

Every American Legion Post in the State has deserving first responders that deserve recognition. We would like to see much better participation in these programs.

This year's American Legion Firefighter of the Year is Cassandra Christy from Rapid City. Cassandra will be invited to the Department Convention to be recognized for her outstanding service. Post 22 submitted her application. Congratulations Ms. Christy!!

New Resolution:

Your American Legion Public Safety Committee is supporting a resolution submitted to Department, by Redfield Post 92, for consideration at the 2023 state convention. This resolution will establish a new, South Dakota American Legion "EMT of the Year Award".

This award will recognize those first responders who are dedicated to serve as Emergency Medical Technicians in our communities across the state.

It has come to our attention that there is a shortage of EMT's and we would like to help promote the much needed skill. Your support for this resolution would be greatly appreciated.

Again, we would like to thank the American Legion and the American Legion family for supporting these programs and ask that you continue to do so.

NOTE: The applications and instructions for these Awards can be found on (sdlegion.org) .

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 includes Matt Lagerstrom, Christopher Rendon, Richard MacDonald, and myself. Along with Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel, we have three Eagle Scouts and two longtime Scouting supporters 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 two primary Councils: The Sioux Council in the East and the Black Hills Area Council in the West. The Sioux and Black Hills Area Council have 159 Scouting units combined, and of those 159 units, 42 are sponsored by an American Legion Post.

Contact your local Troop or Pack and have your Post check into sponsoring or co-sponsoring possibilities. Explore opportunities to help make a positive impact. Consider serving as merit badge counselors. Help provide transportation to an outing. Step forward and help mentor our youth.



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.

Each year, the Department of South Dakota awards one Eagle Scout of the Year and this year's Eagle Scout of the Year is Grant Roth from Sioux Falls, SD. The Troop that sponsored Grant is American Legion Post 15 in Sioux Falls, SD. Congratulations, Roth!

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 Feltman,

This year for the Sons of The American Legion – Detachment of SD has been nothing shy of amazing. After the year we had last year, I knew this year would have its work cut out. The Sons across the state have stepped up and proven they are always up for a challenge. The year was started off by attending the National Convention in Milwaukee Wisconsin. The SD detachment was well represented and brought home an astonishing 11 National awards. These awards included the Triple Nickel Award, Arthur D. Houghton Award, and South Dakota is home to the 2021-2022 National Recruiter of the Year, just to name a few. To put things in perspective, a detachment averages two awards at the National Convention, and we had 11 last year. To say South Dakota is “on the map” at the national level is an understatement.



Coming back from the National Convention, we worked side by side with our other family organizations at the South Dakota State Fair in the Veterans Building. This proved very fruitful as throughout the week each organization recruited numerous members and answered questions that were brought forth. Then we went into Fall meetings where we had an officer at each meeting. We believe having a strong presence at events creates a caring, important impression for the SAL.

We have chartered 5 new squadrons this past year: Menno, Polo, Rock Creek, Aurora, and Bruce. This along with our current membership and renewal rate will allow us to receive the Triple Nickel Award at the National Convention again this year. Two years in a row for this award is unheard of. I believe a third year is very possible with Parkston, Colome, Winner, Gary, and Springfield prison all showing interest in starting a squadron of their own.

As a detachment, we have donated more than \$ per membership capita to the CWF. To this date, that amount is just under \$1,500. We had a Commander’s Challenge this year where funds were raised by squadrons across the state and the

proceeds go to either the Veterans and Childrens Foundation or the Childrens Miracle Network of SD. A check will be presented at the State Convention for both causes.

Back to having a strong presence, our detachment had an officer at each spring meeting as well. No one should ever question our commitment on having a presence, because our leadership drove to Custer and back one night just to install their newly elected officers. And Dewey drove to Ft. Pierre in a blizzard for a Spring meeting, only to find out it he didn't get the message it was postponed...(my fault). Our Alternate NEC, Kerry Jorgenson participated in the National Commander's wreath laying ceremony in Washington, DC again this year.

Currently, I am happy to report South Dakota is 2nd in the nation for membership rate and leading the Midwest Region. We have another all-time high for membership. We sit at 107% membership rate; our renewal rate is 85%. Our South Dakota detachment and sons across the state do amazing work when it comes to membership.

During the Midwinter Conference held in Huron, at the general business meeting, the delegation voted to endorse Jeff Shannon to put his name in consideration for National Vice Commander. If elected, this term would run in 2 years. At the same time, the delegation unanimously endorsed Casey Hanson to put his name in the ring for National Commander. This would be a minimum of 5 years out if considered and elected, as the next 4 years candidates are already set in motion.

I need to give a big thank you to our SAL leadership, Shane, Dewey, Jeff, Kerry, Wyatt, Doug and the headquarters staff. They have all stepped up when asked for help and are there for anything we ask of them.

Respectfully submitted,
Casey Hanson
SD SAL Detachment Commander

TRAINING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Commander,

It has been a privilege to serve as the Training Committee Chair with the following members: PDC Fred Nelson, Kevin Morello, Krisma DeWitt, and Bill Peters.

The Training Committee is a Standing Committee of the Department of South Dakota American Legion as approved by resolution at the 2021 Department Convention in Huron, SD.

The Training Committee has continued to work on a three-phase training plan developed in 2021. The Training Committee has been very active this year, meeting several times through zoom and once face-to-face, and has completed the following goals in 2022-2023.

- Created a Sub-committee to develop an in-depth plan. The following Legion members served on the sub-committee: Dave Booze, Doug Harris, Krisma DeWitt, Kevin Morello, and Jack French.



- Developed a SDALC in-depth plan to provide educational opportunities within the state of South Dakota for Legion members at the Post, District, and Department level.
- Created a SDALC organizational chart.
- Selected Fred Nelson to serve as the SDALC Chancellor.
- Provided the following classes at the 2023 Mid-winter conference; MyLegion: Kevin Morello and Bill Peters, Successful Posts: Dept Vice Commander Doug Harris, Running a meeting: Dept Finance Officer Krisma DeWitt, Security and Scams: PDC Nelson, Buddy Checks: Commander Feltman & Adjutant Hempel.
- Conducted the first annual SDALC on April 22, 2023. The following classes were taught. Mentorship: Past National Commander David Rehbein, Running a Meeting: Dept Finance Officer Krisma DeWitt, Resolution Writing: Dept Adjutant Kevin Hempel, and Train-the-Trainer: Dept Vice Commander Doug Harris.
- Created a SDALC budget for 2024.

The long-term goal is to grow SDALC into a comprehensive in-state training program. Additional work needs to be done to build a comprehensive program and it will be a multi-year process. As we move forward the Training Committee has the following goals for 2023-2024. Continue to provide classes at Mid-winter. Conduct a face-to-face 2nd Annual SDALC. Begin to develop a train-the-trainer cadre. Develop and approve classes and lesson plans. Make approved classes and lesson plans available to the Posts, Districts, and the Department. Recruit and select skilled instructors to conduct face-to-face and video training. The Training Committee encourages all Legionnaires to provide input, suggestions, and ideas for classes, instructional methods, and instructors.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack French
Training Committee Chair

TRUST FUND COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Mr. Commander,

This past year has been one of change and hopefully a new direction. As directed by the Department Executive Committee, we have changed the portfolio from Wells Fargo to Edward Jones. This transition was authorized on 1 Feb 2023 and the last of the funds were transferred on 4/25/2023. The balance of the fund when fully transferred was \$636,622. We now can get fund information when we want it. Working with Travis and Taylor of Edward Jones has been outstanding, and we look



forward to working with them in the future. The market continues to be volatile, but with the transition, we hope to show some gains. in the future. It has been a pleasure to be working with a local company again.

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 members are 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.



The Department VA&R Commission meets once per year with an additional meeting at the discretion of the chairman. We make every effort to meet face-to-face with an alternative method by Zoom or teleconference.

There are numerous awards every post in our department can win throughout the year and be recognized for their achievement either at our MidWinter Conference or on stage at our annual department convention. There are Americanism awards, Membership awards, and several individual awards Legionnaires can win. Is your post aware that it can submit for the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Award for Excellence? This award is open to every post in our department. The award will recognize one post in our department each year 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 or you may contact State Headquarters for assistance. The deadline for all post applications for this award is May 1st of each year. The winning post will be recognized on stage at all state conventions with a beautiful plaque and group photo to commemorate their accomplishments. Please ask your post leadership to apply for the award.

As a member of the National VA&R Commission, myself and PDC Jurgens had the privilege of attending the Washington Conference in February 2023 in Washington D.C. to listen and participate in the national VA&R agenda. We listen to many speakers and take action on several resolutions dealing with veterans benefits, veterans health as well as the National Cemeteries. We make a point to provide all the information we can get my hands on from our meetings 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 Feltman, 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 will be glad you did.

Respectfully submitted,
Warren L. Aas,
Chairman, VA&R Commission

V.A.V.S. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REPORT

Thank You, State Commander Doug Feltman for the appointment to Chairman of the V.A.V.S. Committee this year. It was challenging at times, but in the end we met the goals we set out for.

We have dedicated leaders in our VA Hospital Representatives: Sioux Falls VA Hospital VAVS Representative Larry Panning; Hot Springs VA Medical Center and State Veterans Home VAVS Representative Angela Koch; and our Ft. Meade VA Medical Center VAVS Representative Buck DeWeese. Additionally, I stopped and visited with Sioux Falls VA hospital on site coordinator, Crista Pick, she gave me a tour of the improvements made to storage areas and introduced me to one of the volunteers. We discussed the operation and procedures used by her office and I left with the impression the operation was running quite well.



During our annual VAVS meeting, it was decided that coming out of the COVID restrictions and with rising inflation to raise the amount given to each facility from \$1000 to \$1100. These funds are used for our Veteran's daily needs, for outing activities, and for the annual Halloween & Christmas parties at each center. Each VA medical center has similar needs such as dental and personal hygiene supplies. There is always a need for snacks [beef jerky], popcorn and coffee, shoes, clothing, stamps,

and phone cards. To meet this need it is best that each facility has the cash funds available to purchase what they need.

Knowing that most Posts send in a donation of \$10 for each of our Veterans final service, I encourage that with the recent increase of the funeral stipend from \$50 to \$100 that Posts increase that donation to \$20 or more. Helping support VAVS is just another way The American Legion continues to take care of our Veterans. It is a welcome reminder to our Veterans in Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Nursing Home and VA Hospitals that "You Are Not Forgotten".

In closing I want to say "Thank You" to all the VAVS. Committee members for their dedicated work for Veterans. "Thank You" to all the Legion Posts, Auxiliaries, Sons of American Legion Squadrons and the American Legion Rider Chapters for your time and monies that go for a great cause, the Veterans! Here's wishing good health and God's Blessing to all of you. Please keep the donations coming and Volunteer whenever you can!

Respectfully,
Daniel L. Wyatt
VAVS Committee Chairman

VAVS COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance, 5-1-22		\$9,413.35
RECEIPTS:		
Interest	\$ 12.90	
Memorials and Donations	<u>\$3,539.64</u>	
	\$3,552.54	<u>\$3,552.54</u>
		\$12,965.89
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:		
VA Facilities	<u>\$3,300.00</u>	
	<u>\$3,300.00</u>	<u>\$3,300.00</u>
Balance, 5-1-23		\$9,665.89

**SUMMARY OF 2023 AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA
CONVENTION AND CONVENTION
COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

2023 CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

The following Convention resolutions were reviewed for the 2023 year to be considered at the Department convention.

Resolution No. SDAL 23-1

Submitted by: Potter Post #3 of Chamberlain

Title: Selection Of The Department Legionnaire Of The Year

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Return to Post for revision.

Convention Resolution Committee Action: Send to Internal Organization Committee.

Internal Organization Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

RESOLVED, that the Department R.C. Gabrielson Memorial Leadership Award selection committee also select the Department of South Dakota Legionnaire of the Year.

The resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. SDAL 23-2

Submitted By: Clay Kiser Post #92 Of Redfield

Title: South Dakota American Legion EMT Of The Year Award Internal

Affairs Commission Action: Sent to Finance Committee for review.

Convention Resolution Committee Action: Send to Convention Americanism Committee.

Convention Americanism Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

RESOLVED, that at the February 2023 regular meeting of the Clay Kiser Post 92, Redfield, SD, our membership urges The American Legion Department of South Dakota to establish a state EMT of the Year award; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that like the Law and Firefighter of the Year awards, post across the state be encouraged to participate in the EMT of the Year award and the Department winner be recognized at the Department convention or an appropriate American Legion function.

The resolution was adopted.

Resolution No. SDAL 23-3

Submitted By: Arthur Peterson Post #136 of Chester

Title: Changes To 38 Code Of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 38 Section 38.630(2) Burial Headstones And Markers; Medallions

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Refer To Convention Rehabilitation Committee.

Convention Rehabilitation Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation as amended.

RESOLVED, By The American Legion Department of South Dakota in Annual Department Convention assembled in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion support legislation to amend Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 38.630 (2) to open eligibility for Government-issued markers on privately marked graves regardless of the date of death of the Veteran; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the National Adjutant of The American Legion for consideration at the 104th Annual National Convention of The American Legion to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 25-31, 2023.

The resolution was adopted

Resolution No. SDAL 23-4

Submitted By: Arthur Peterson Post #136 of Chester

Title: Changes To Rating Requirements For Title 38 Code Of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension

Internal Affairs Commission Action: Refer To Convention Rehabilitation Committee.

Convention Rehabilitation Committee Action: DO PASS recommendation.

RESOLVED, By The American Legion Department of South Dakota, in Annual Department Convention assembled in Oacoma, South Dakota, June 8-11, 2023, That The American Legion support legislation to amend existing language for the 10 percent rating in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to read “or; minimum evaluation for an individual who requires continuous medication for control,” and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support legislation to amend existing language for all rating requirements in Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.101 Diagnostic Code 7101, Hypertension to better align with hypertension standards widely recognized by the broader medical community.

The resolution was adopted

2022-2023



DOUG FELTMAN
**“Building A
Stronger Family”**

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

