



Past Department Commander Donavon “Don” Mason Remembered



Donavon “Don” Mason
Past Department Commander,
1981-1982

Donavon Ray Mason, age 88, of Platte, SD died shortly after saying goodbye to his beloved wife of 61 years, Arlene. He passed away on Wednesday, April 22, 2020 at the Platte Care Center. He was born to Orrin E. and Myrtle (Parrish) Mason on February 25, 1932, in Platte, SD. Don and Arlene’s family will be

holding a memorial service to celebrate their lives when it is once again safe to gather.

After graduation from Platte High School in 1951, Don enlisted in the Marine Corp and served his country during the Korean Conflict. After his service, Don became a member of the American Legion and went on to hold offices as Local Commander, State Commander, and National Vice Commander.

Don and his wife, Arlene, operated a family farm and cattle operation. Don was always very proud to live in and be involved with the Platte community. He served on the school board, bank board, Community Building Board, was instrumental in rebuilding the Platte Sale Barn, and assisted the volunteer teams in building the Lake Platte Golf Course, Trinity Lutheran Church, and Lyric Theatre. Don enjoyed spending time with his family, golfing, playing cards, reading, and a good steak.

Grateful for sharing his life are, his two daughters: Kim (Tim) Tripp of Hartford, SD and Jill (Dale) Schulte of Cedar Falls, IA; three grandsons: Tom Tripp of Chattanooga, TN, Adam Tripp (Me’Shaya) of Hartford, SD and Kyle Schulte of Iowa City, IA; one granddaughter, Madison Schulte of Iowa City, IA; a great granddaughter, Twila Tripp; two brothers: Lester (Fern) Mason and Kenny Mason; and two sisters: Alice Fischer and Georgia Adolph.

Don was preceded in death by his wife, Arlene (4/11/2020); two daughters: Jean and Karla; two brothers: Clarence and Vernon; a sister, Irene; six brothers-in-law; four sisters-in-law; four nephews; and his parents.

Warner Legionnaire Leads Suicide Prevention Efforts with Equine Therapy Provided at DTOM 22/0 Ranch

This is part 1 of a two-piece series. Look out for the August 2020 Legion News for part 2. By Courtney VanZanten, Dept Service Officer Chris Reder knows pain.

A 1998 motorcycle accident cut short what was on track to be a career of service in the United States Navy. A second accident in 2013 reignited old injuries. A third—this time, semi vs. tornado—caused a severe traumatic brain injury. Months and years of traditional rehabilitation couldn’t seem to dull the constant aches. He turned to alcohol, but while it quelled the discomfort, it added depression. On top of it all, he was thrown into the world of single parenting. He was treading water in an oceanic storm.

In an attempt to find himself again, Chris started volunteering with Veterans Service Organizations, such as the American Legion, VFW, Team Rubicon and more. During this work, Chris saw a multitude of fellow veterans grappling with mental health and addiction, and realized there was a definite opportunity to help. He created his own non-profit, DTOM 22/0, to help combat Veteran Suicide.

A chance introduction by VFW chaplain Fred Kubitz to Terry Draper, founder of the Horseback Miracles Ranch in Larkspur, CO, led to Chris becoming certified as a Draper Sensory Method practitioner. The Draper Sensory Method is an innovative and unique methodology based on scientific principles of the brain-body connection and a well-defined series of equine mounted activities—in simpler terms, a very special form of equine therapy. After certification, Chris brought home Max, a quarter horse also trained in the method. The DTOM 22/0 Ranch was ready to start helping veterans



Warner Post #137 member and DTOM 22/0 founder Chris Reder prepares therapy horse Max for a session in the DTOM 22/0 riding arena.

in a very real way.

I met up with Chris and Max on April 29th, 2020. I wasn’t sure if I’d even be able to meet up, given the COVID-19 shutdown affecting so many businesses, but Chris had purposefully kept the doors to the Ranch open, knowing that the isolation and inability to secure their regular, traditional therapy appointments could wreak havoc on the mental health of veterans already struggling.

After a tour of the ranch—which was an impressive show of community support (but more on that in Part 2)—it was Max’s turn to shine.

Chris brought Max into the arena, and started warming him up in preparation for my ride. A few observations made while watching the warm-ups: 1) Max is a beautiful horse, though a bit beefier in the back end than most, and 2) he has a noticeably peculiar gait when he gets into work mode.

Turns out, both of those characteristics are part of what makes Max so successful in his duties. Keeping his head low, Max’s gait becomes very

rhythmic in nature—those back hips sway in such a way that can only be described as discombobulating to the rider.

It’s hard to describe what I felt on that ride—which says a lot, for an avid crossword junkie. As I closed my eyes and put my hands on Max, it almost felt like the horse was pivoting, or even going backwards at times, when I know that he was keeping track around the arena. Over the course of the treatment, my stance relaxed, my guard let down, and I truly experienced relaxation on that horse. It was almost transcendental.

As your Department Service Officer, I must highlight that June is PTSD Awareness Month. There are many organizations that raise awareness for mental health, but the DTOM 22/0 Ranch is doing more than its fair share of advocacy. To follow through with free-to-veterans alternative therapy that puts words into action is beyond commendable. To support the work of the ranch and the fellow Legionnaires that run it, visit www.dtom220.org to learn more, volunteer or donate.

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Bridgewater Legionnaire Celebrates 75th Membership Year

John (Jack) Vondra was born May 9th 1925 (95 years young) and served in the Navy during World War Two. He is married to his wife Lois, and have 9 children together and many happy grandkids. Jack has been an American Legion member for 75 years, and has been one of their key Go-Getters the entire time. Active with the Bridgewater High School doing presentations for the Boys and Girls State programs for over 55 and has done military honors for 80 percent of the veterans in the Bridgewater area. He is active in assuring that flags are installed at the local cemeteries and flags are displayed on main street for our current veterans. He served and organized the Post 111 Feather Party Committee for 50 years+ and even at 95 is always there to serve. He is a small business owner of Jack's Jewelry and Clock Repair. His community leadership went beyond the Post involving service as Bridgewater's Finance Officer and other duties, as well as also working in the St. Stevens Church suppers and bazaar. Members of the community view Jack as Bridgewater's Jedi - Their Guiding Force.—Submitted by Post #111

Rock Creek Legion Steps Up to Plate As New Post

Chartered this Spring 2020, Post 324 is already active delivering boxes of food to many homeless, disabled and honorably discharged veterans. Post visitations during May included the small towns of Bullhead, and McLaughlin, South Dakota, on the Standing Rock Reservation.

Additionally, a daughter of one member took up the task of making masks for local veterans. These were handed out along with the food boxes in response to the COVID19 pandemic.

As the month of May has progressed, Post 324 worked at two local cemeteries in partnership with community members. Painting of flag poles, crosses, mowing, trimming, and general cleanup was the order of the day. Afterwards, a BBQ was provided by members of Post 324.—Submitted by Post #324.



Canistota Legion Aids Local Farmers with Hog Purchases

COVID-19 has played havoc in the recent months, notably creating a supply chain backlog in the local agricultural sector with the temporary shut-down of Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls and JBS in Worthington. Both factories are mainstays of local hog farmers—without the ability to slaughter, hog farmers were facing difficult decisions.

Post #162 of Canistota recognized the opportunity to not only help a local farmer facing that decision, but the community as a whole. The Post purchased three hogs from Ferlyn Hofer, who in kind donated another. The Post then paid for the butcher and processing of all four hogs.

Upon receipt of the finished product, Jenarde Post #162 members plan on donating the meat to anyone in the local community with a need. As Commander Brian Kruse (pictured left) stated, "No one should go hungry. If our Post can help with that, we will." —Submitted by Post #162



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ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

These Annual Committee Reports are submitted and printed in the South Dakota Legion News in accordance with Article IV, Section 4 of The American Legion Department of South Dakota Constitution.

Annual Report of the Department Commander



Fred Nelson

Legionnaires,

The first half the year flew by, it was exciting and eventful. I put 38,000 miles on the van and seemed to be shooting back and forth across South Dakota like I was in a pinball game. The staff at the Vivian Truckstop were starting to recognize me. I was taking pictures, shooting videos, visiting Posts, and helping to promote the American Legion throughout South Dakota.

The second half of the year, COVID-19 hit, and everything slowed to a turtles' pace. The van is parked, and the new norm is meeting via the Zoom confer-

encing system. Don't get me wrong, it is always great to see everyone's face on my computer screen, but it just isn't the same as a face-to-face meeting with a good old fashioned handshake. But we need to be thankful that we are still able to meet and conduct business.

What is Zoom? It is a video communications system that is easy and reliable. It allows up to 300 to connect and attend an online meeting. It is conference calling with video. A person can call in with a telephone, computer, tablet, or smartphone. The Department, as well as the District Commanders, and Committee Chairs now have access and can take advantage of connecting with other members via Zoom.

COVID-19 caused the cancelation of the Spring District Meetings, the Youth Trooper Academy, Boys State, the American Legion 2020 Baseball Season, the National Convention, and many other events and meetings. I attended a National Zoom meeting, where Department Commanders and Adjutants gathered to discuss how each department was dealing with COVID-19. Our National Commanders and the Vice Commanders will each be staying in office for another year. In South Dakota, our current elected officers in District and Department leadership positions have been asked to remain in office. We'll add District elections to our Fall district meetings, and the department elected leadership will remain in office until our next convention. The Internal Affairs Committee is currently reviewing our constitution and by-laws for needed changes. We'll want to be prepared if we re-encounter another event such as we have this year.

At the end of March, a small group of us gathered at the American Legion Post Home in Brookings and conducted interviews for the Department Adjutant's position. We arranged the seating to where we were all a safe distance from the others, and we interviewed three highly-quality candidates. From the three, we selected Kevin Hempel. Kevin served thirty years in the Navy, was currently serving as a vice district commander and as our Department Training Committee Chairman. Kevin accepted the position and joined the headquarters team a couple of weeks later. Department Adjutant Travis Flisrand spent two weeks with Kevin. Travis shared that Kevin listened well and took a lot of notes. Kevin is now on his own and is doing a great job. Next time you find yourself with our department adjutant, please introduce yourself.

Before I end my report, I would like to mention four items:

- Take some time during this time of social distancing and complete the American Legion Basic Training, which is located online at <https://www.legion.org/alei>. There are no costs, and you learn about our history and programs.
- I encourage Legionnaires to consider applying to attend the National American Legion College. It is an experience I will always be thankful I had, and I value the lessons I learned.
- Post Consolidated Reports (PCR) – Our goal is 100% of all posts in the department submitting their report. Talk to your Post Adjutant and ask them about the report. Offer your assistance.
- Membership – Lastly, I have to mention membership. It is what makes the American Legion successful, and it is the key to the success of our programs. Everyone knows someone that isn't a member, ask them to join and share our great organization with them.

Annual Report of the Employment Chairman



Greg Diaz

Commander,

It is my sincere pleasure to submit this year's report on behalf of the Employment Committee. Among the many great things the American Legion does for veterans, promoting the employment and retention of veterans is one of them. Veterans bring unique skills to any organization. In addition to excellent technical education and training, veterans have a wealth of experience in a broad range of areas, not the least of which is leadership. These skills, along with a work ethic second to none, are hallmarks of veterans, and they bring tremendous value-added wherever they serve. The annual Employment Awards showcase some of the great organizations that support veterans and enables us the opportunity to recognize them for their contributions.

For 2019-2020, we received a total of 6 nominations, in 4 categories:

Olson-Reid Post #250 nominated Daktronics for three awards: Employer of Veterans - Large, Employer of Older Workers, and the Award to Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons;

Sidney L. Smith Post #24 nominated Ken's Superfair Foods for Employment of Older Workers;

Allstate Peterbilt was nominated by Box Elder Post #315 for Employer of Veterans - Small; and

Stratford Post #0207 submitted a nomination for Dakota Supply Group for Employer of Veterans - Small.

All the applications were very well done. But, the standouts were:

Allstate Peterbilt for Employer of Veterans - Small, and

Ken's Superfair Foods the selection for Employer of Older Workers.

Daktronics was non-competitive, but still an outstanding, selection for both Employers of Veterans - Large, and the Award to Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons.

We are very proud of these organizations, and not only congratulate them for their great submissions, but commend them for their support of veterans, and for recognizing the great bang for the buck they're receiving. In the end, both the employer and the veteran benefit. We are confident our selections will fare well at the national level and wish them the best of luck!

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. I'd like to thank each of the members for their great work in selecting this year's winners!

We hope that in 2020, we're able to get the word out, and receive even more nominations. We are certain there are many more organizations that deserve the recognition.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory K. Diaz
Employment Chairman

Annual Report of the Trust Fund Chairman



Randy Rakness

Mr. Commander,

The Trust Fund was doing great in 2019, but then 2020 came and it is a different story. The market has shown about a 20% decline so far this year. The committee met once this past year and agree that the fund take an even more conservative approach than in the past. The fund has averaged 2.29% annual yield, even with the negative market so far in 2020.

In 2019, \$136,318 was added to the fund from other accounts within the Legion. The year end market value as of April 29, 2019 was \$422,095, compared to a year end market value on April 28, 2020 of \$551,906. If you take out the \$136,318 investment, we show a net

loss of \$6,507 so far.

The current asset allocation for the trust is as follows:

Cash Alternatives is 2.8% which currently yields 0.24%;

Fixed Income 36.4% with an average yield of 3.40%;

Equities is 53.2% with an average yield of 1.54%;

Real Assets is 4.6% with an average yield of 2.27%;

Alternative investments 2.8% with an average yield of 4.39%.

Miscellaneous .2% with an average yield of 0.24%

The committee met with the investment manager and agreed to monitor the fund as needed in the coming year. We are in a bear market and expect volatility into 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Randy Rakness
Chairman, Trust Committee

There is little doubt in my mind that 2020 is a year I will not forget, as I am sure many of you will also remember these challenging times for our communities, state, and nation. We are blessed to live in South Dakota, and I am thankful for our American Legion Family.

For God and Country, we associate together!
Fred Nelson, Your Department Commander

Sons of the American Legion

Terry Hanson
SAL Commander



Greetings to all,

I hope this article finds you in good health. What a year I must say it has been.

Well it makes me proud to be part of such a great organization. What a year the Sons of the American Legion have had so far, we are number 4 out of the 55 Detachments. We sit at 122.571 percent of membership. National gave South Dakota a goal of 700 members, and as your state commander, I set a goal of 1000 members. Well, my goal fell short, but as a state we did it with 851 members total. GREAT JOB TEAM SOUTH DAKOTA. THANK YOU ALL. South Dakota is sitting at 95.70 renewal rate which is unheard of. Great job all.

But with all good news there is bad news too. The South Dakota SAL voted at midwinter to cancel 10 Squadron Charters that is bad news. All Squadrons please send Dewey a SON OF THE YEAR nomination as soon as possible. This is a person who has gone overboard to help the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion in their community. Also please send Dewey a nomination for Recruiter of the year.

Squadrons please go online and please do YOUR CONSOLIDATION SQUADRON REPORT. With this newsletter will also be a printed CSR you can submit to Dewey. As it stands as of the end of April, we have 14 Squadrons well over 100%.

As many of you know the Sons are deeply involved in child welfare which we sponsor as one of our main things we do. Our donation to National this year is \$798.00 in which we do not have so we are asking Posts and Squadrons for their help, please send checks, cash or money order to Dewey marked national child and youth. GREAT JOB Team SOUTH DAKOTA.

THANK YOU, SOUTH DAKOTA SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, FOR ALL YOU DO .

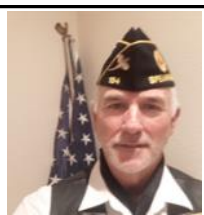
Also THANK YOU SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION FOR LETTING US BE A PART OF YOUR GREAT ORGANIZATION. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP.

Terry Hanson

South Dakota SAL Commander

American Legion Riders

Buck DeWeese
Riders Liaison



Greetings Legion Family,

This report is a brief summary of SOME of the REPORTED projects by the ALR in SD.

The American Legion Riders Group is a shining star in support of the American Legion mission. Their efforts are centered around the fundamental Pillars of the American Legion: 1. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation 2. National Security 3. Americanism 4. Children and Youth.

1. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation: ALR Chapters across the state help support our Veterans with visits to each of our VA Hospitals. Holiday Parties are sponsored by combined efforts of the ALR and American Legion Auxiliary. Basket treats are delivered to the hospital rooms and even home of veterans. Time spent visiting with these heroes is appreciated as much if not more than the gifts we bring.

2. One of the biggest demonstrations of Veteran support our National Security is the annual "Rolling Thunder" ride to Washington DC. In what was probably the last official ride in May 2019, over ½ million motorcyclists converged on our Nation's Capitol to show support of our fallen Brothers, Sisters and Patriots. Dozens of riders from SD joined the ride both individually and in small groups to show our support.

3. Americanism defines everything the Riders stand for. From the patches on their vests to the flags proudly waving on the backs of their bikes as Riders "Lead the Way" at parades, funerals and escorts. Rider Flag Lines fire up the crowd and players as their roaring machines for a tunnel for Home football games at Black Hills State University. Every basket of goodies handed to veterans is adorned with Red White and Blue.

4. Legacy Rides take place across the Nation in support of the children of our fallen Vets. Last year main ride was better suited for jet skis than Harley's, but started and ended on time nonetheless. Dozens of brave, shivering SD riders departed Aberdeen in the early morning, rain soaked ride that "passed the baton" from North Dakota to Nebraska on it's way to Texas. SD Legion Posts provided refreshments along the way in support of our riders as they braved one thunderstorm after another. Many chapters across the state host flag ceremonies at Elementary Schools to teach children Flag etiquette. They typically start in the gymnasium where a short history of the Flag and definition of what the Stars and Stripes all stand for, how to respect the 'colors' as they pass, the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem and finally a Flag raising ceremony outside.

From Bar-B-Ques to Basketball game, American Legion Riders are making their presence felt and appreciated with Flag Lines and support for public events. Our greatest struggle is to get names and numbers collected so our members can receive credit for all they. We have 19 chapters across the state. At the Winter Convention in Chamberlain, we hosted a 1 hour meeting and had representatives from 7 of them attend.

We even had 1 from Nebraska. Each shared some highlights of their Chapters 2019 events as well as plans for 2020. The group also approved and set in motion a state-wide Memorial Ride to Pierre. Scheduled for May 29, the purpose of the "Wreath Run" was to meet in Pierre for a Friday night BBQ hosted by the Pierre Chapter followed by a Saturday morning ceremonial laying of a wreath at the Capital Memorial Park. COVID-19 managed to delay the ride but not the spirit. It will be rescheduled.

As evidenced by the fortitude of our Riders who rode to the last "Rolling Thunder" and braved the "thunder and rain" from the North South Legacy Ride, we won't let Corona Virus ruin our summer. We want 2020 to be remembered for the "Can Do" spirit shown by what Riders did accomplish in support of our Veterans in 2020. We will "Continue the Legacy" of our Legion Commander and Heritage of the American Legion and American Legion Riders in 2020.

Respectfully,

Buck DeWeese

Department Liaison to American Legion Riders



Though rainy, members of the Post #18 Honor Guard completed their traditional Memorial Day Services at the Mitchell cemetery. Essays were read by local students, and ALA shared poetry. —Submitted by Hugh Holmes



Spearfish Legionnaire Brian Hambek and Department Chaplain Patrick Lewellen lead services at Whitewood Cemetery on Memorial Day. The post visited five cemeteries throughout the day. —Submitted by Post #164



Aberdeen Legionnaires performed Memorial Day services at two cemeteries across town, featuring guest speaker Jon Schaff, Northern State University Political Science Professor. —Submitted by Post #24



Bryant, SD, May 25, 2020— On Memorial Day, American Legion members from Post #37 gathered at the Bryant Legion home to perform a "socially-distant" ceremony —Picture by Jennifer Nielsen Carstensen

Memorial Day 2020



On Memorial Day, members of the Joseph A. T. Moe Post #175 performed services at Baltic Cemetery, Pioneer Cemetery, West Niadros Cemetery and East Niadros Cemetery. —Submitted by Post #175



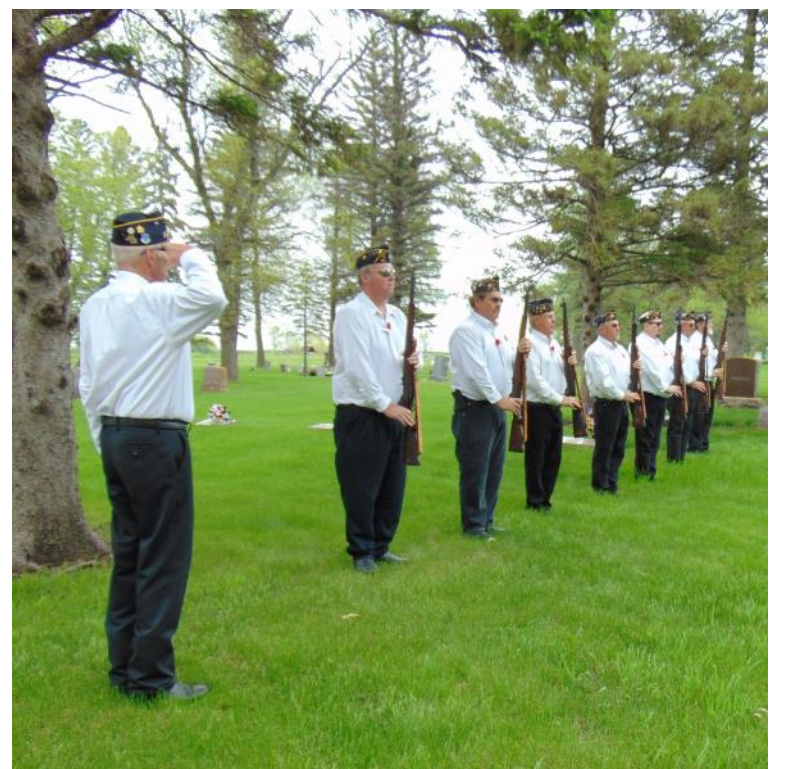
Custer City, SD, May 23, 2020— On May 22nd, American Legion Riders Custer Post #46 gathered at Hot Springs VA National Cemetery. They did so to remember Lieutenant Colonel Myron L. Shade; first elected state commander of the American Legion's South Dakota Department, and first superintendent of Custer State Park. Remembrance ceremonies included decorating LtCol Shade's gravesite with an American flag honoring his service in both the Spanish American War and the Great War, and the laying of an American Legion wreath. In doing so, this small but dedicated group honored the memory of one who had done so much for his country. It is how they keep the faith with those who have gone before. —Submitted by Mark Mills, Custer Post #46



On Monday May 25, Chauncey Eagle Horn-Philip Iyotte Post #125 carried out their century-old tradition of visiting cemeteries across the Rosebud Reservation. They were led by Post Commander Carole Gregg. Post Adjutant and District 2 commander Eugene Iron Shell, Jr. was the bugler. The color guard and firing party were made up of members of the American Legion Riders (including SAL and ALA).

The post says prayers, fires the three volleys, and provides a live bugler to sound Taps. The Post visited 20 cemeteries and expended 300-400 rounds of ammunition to honor their fallen comrades. The post formed up at 7:30 a.m. and their last visit was at 6 p.m.

The tradition continued, despite the Covid-19 pandemic. Extra precautions were in effect. In July 1928, The American Legion Monthly wrote a story about the Chauncey Eagle Horn Post. The author stated "it is doubtful whether any post in the country carries out a more strenuous Memorial Day program than the Rosebud post." Back then only six cemeteries were visited over an 8 hour period. They went in a team and wagon. That statement seems more true in 2020 than in 1928. —Submitted by Eugene Iron Shell Jr., Rosebud Post #125



The Funeral Honors Team of Higgins-Jessen Post #88, does their final salute to our Nation's Post Everlasting Servicemen during their Memorial Day Observance in White, SD. The Post hosted an abbreviated form of its annual Ceremony due to The Virus, and was proud to host the outstanding crowd from our community that came to remember those who sacrificed parts of their lives so that we all may live better lives in the future. —Submitted by Matt Lagerstrom, Post 88. Photo by Brenda Klienjan.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Annual Report of the Legislative Committee Chairman



Rod Martens

Commander,

The annual report of the South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee. The members are Chairman, PDC Rod Martens of Piedmont, PDC Gary Watts of White, PDC Rick MacDonald of Hermosa, District 6 Commander Doug Feltman of Chamberlain and Chris Van Delist of Rapid City.

One resolution was brought forth and passed at our annual convention. However, due to later negotiations with the Governor, the prime sponsor withdrew the legislation.

The Committee met November 5, 2019 via video conference call. Adjutant Flisrand reviewed the SD Veterans Councils priorities and announced the dates for the SD Veterans Roundtables. Three Legislative Roundtables were held in December in preparation for the 2020 legislative session. These roundtable discussions were held in Sioux Falls on December 4th, December 5th in Watertown and December 7th in Rapid City. Legislative Roundtables are set up each year by the members of the South Dakota Veterans Council to present their agendas to members of the legislature. All Legionnaires are invited and encouraged to attend.

The Legislative Committee meeting was conducted February 10th, 2020, 3:30pm at Post 8 in Pierre, prior to the legislative reception. The legislative reception was held during the evening and was well attended by Legislators and Legionnaires. Our caps are off to the members of Post 8 for their hospitality, and for making the legislative reception a huge success. Since there were no legislative issues brought forth by the American Legion, we set our eyes on other legislation brought forth concerning Veterans. Bills that were tracked and or supported are listed below:

Chairman Martens reviewed the legislative bills being tracked by Dept. Headquarters for the Legislative Committee. After discussion the following recommendations were made on each bill:

SB 2 – Require the Department of Social Services to fully support a statewide centralized resource information system. Signed by the Governor.

SB 35 – Revise the appropriations for the State Veterans Cemetery and to declare an emergency. Signed by the Governor.

SB 84 -Authorize service animals in-training to enter certain establishments. Signed by the Governor.

SB 124 -Revise provisions regarding group pheasant hunts for disabled veterans. Signed by the Governor.

SB 156 – Repeal provisions regarding the South Dakota Veterans Commission. Signed by the Governor.

SR 701 – In support of rescinding the Medals of Honor given to United States soldiers for the involvement and participation of the soldiers in the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890. Deferred to the 41st day.

HB 1030 – Revise certain provisions regarding the Board of Technical Education. Signed by the Governor.

HB 1034 – Make an appropriation to fund tax refunds for elderly person and person with disabilities and to declare an emergency. Signed by the Governor.

HB 1036 – Revise provisions regarding the issuance of certain military specialty plates. Tabled.

HB 1062 – Increase the financial empowerment of state residents. Signed by the Governor.

HB 1069 – Authorize certain veterans to attend courses offered at post-secondary technical institutes without payment of tuition. Signed by the Governor.

HB 1083 – Rename the post-secondary institutes as technical colleges. Signed by the Governor.

I would like to thank members of the Legislative Committee for their dedication.

Commander, thank you for allowing me to serve as your chairman and to be a part of your successful year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod Martens

Chairman, Department Legislative Committee 2019-2020

Annual Report of the Boys State Director



C.P. Van Delist

Commander,

It is with deep regret I must report that due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic The 2020 South Dakota American Legion Boys State Session has been canceled. This decision was not taken lightly, the Board conducted a mission analysis with key decision points which led to the difficult decision. This year was poised to be a great year, at the time of the decision more than 150 boys were signed up for the session.

In late August to early September we will hold our annual meeting details are still to be determined as to location and actual dates. We will make it a working session to allow the corporation to plan for the 2021 session. Some of the efforts are; enhancing the experience, forms and processes updates, options for those boys who were unable to attend in 2020 and crafting a return to a six day session.

As always Northern State University has been incredible in supporting the program. In the last year their marketing department has assisted in creating some great professional promotional materials. As well they have assisted in other marketing support that has been very valuable in recruiting more boys to the program.

Finally I would like to thank all the individual Posts for their support of this amazing program and providing such a great opportunity to boys in our state.

Respectfully submitted,

C.P. Van Delist

Director, South Dakota American Legion Boys State

Black Hawk Native Graduates from U.S. Coast Guard Academy



Ensign Rachel Morello graduated from the U. S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., on May 20, 2020 and was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard. Ens. Morello completed four years of intensive academic, physical and leadership training, resulting in a Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in Operational Research and Computer Analytics. Following graduation Morello has been assigned to Flight School, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL. She is the daughter of Kevin and Debra Morello of Black Hawk.

As one of the smallest and most specialized of the five federal service academies the U.S. Coast Guard Academy offers a quality higher education and professional development experience. Cadets there devote themselves to an honor concept, and upon graduation go directly into positions of leadership in service to others. Learn more at www.usccga.edu.

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ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

These Annual Committee Reports are submitted and printed in the South Dakota Legion News in accordance with Article IV, Section 4 of The American Legion Department of South Dakota Constitution.

Annual Report of the Americanism Commission Chairman



Doug Harris

Commander Nelson:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Department Americanism Chairman. Your support and leadership for the programs of this vital American Legion Pillar during this unusual year have been greatly appreciated. The challenges started early with widespread flooding during the Fall District meetings and culminated with schools closing throughout the state. Eventually, nearly every program was canceled due to the Corona Virus pandemic. Despite these numerous challenges, the Americanism officers and members pushed forward with school visits early in the school year to get the word out about our excellent programs.

I especially appreciate all those who helped me create and implement the "Big 3" marketing plan. The goal was to create a single page document our members could utilize to explain and market the Oratorical, Boys State, and Youth Trooper programs to High School counselors, students and community leaders (Scouting/PTA/4-H). Department Staff, Boys State Board members and the marketing team at Northern State University were instrumental in putting this together and creating the materials sent out to Posts and schools. All the cancellations and disruptions make it hard to measure the success or failure of this marketing tool. In conjunction with my partners mentioned earlier, I will continue to refine and utilize this tool for the 2021 school year.

We had a successful Department Oratorical contest (despite a few minor "mess ups" from a new chairman) during the Midwinter conference. Thank you again to all of you who helped pull that off. A special thank you to former chairman, Larry Madsen for mentoring me and helping us all through the process. Five of the eight districts sent a competitor with District 3 competitor (Samantha Leigh Tamanus from Gregory) taking the trophy and \$1,000 scholarship. Unfortunately, the National competition was canceled, but our Department winner still received the \$2,000 scholarship she would have earned by competing in the 1st round of the competition.

2020 Boys State was canceled in early April after the Boys State Board of Directors weighed all available Corona Virus information as well as the predicted path forward. This move was nearly unprecedented, with the only other cancellation taking place during WWII. This decision meant an entire year group of young leaders would be unable to attend this program. After much discussion between multiple Departments and National Americanism leaders, National ruled that "American Legion departments possess the authority to establish their own criteria for Boys State program eligibility, selection, participation and operation and should proceed with their respective programs accordingly." As your Americanism Chairman, I will be lobbying hard to allow this year's Junior class to apply and attend the 2021 program along with next year's Junior class (meaning both Juniors and Seniors for 2021). This decision will most likely be made when the Boys State Board of Directors meet this summer to plan for next year. Congratulations go out to several of our 2019 Boys Staters; one received a \$10,000 Samsung Scholarship and another an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy. There are many truly outstanding individuals who attend this program and we look forward to meeting the next group.

Our Youth Trooper Academy was also canceled after careful consultation between Department leadership and SD Highway Patrol personnel. Fortunately, this program already allows both Juniors and Seniors to apply and attend. Unfortunately, 2020 Seniors who didn't attend last year as Juniors, will not have an opportunity to experience this wonderful program. Thank you to all who worked hard to put this year's program together and continue to adjust to and overcome obstacles to plan for 2021. One highlight from this year was the attendance at the Midwinter Conference by Kellen Hood, the first South Dakota Youth Trooper Academy graduate to join the South Dakota Highway Patrol. See the April 2020 Legion News (located online at [sdlegion.org/legion-news](https://www.sdlegion.org/legion-news)) article for a picture: <https://www.sdlegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Legion-News-Apr-2020-Web.pdf>

As I write this report, there has been some exciting news. The Department Executive Committee approved a motion to "to sanction a 2020 South Dakota American Legion Baseball Program to be administered by Sponsoring Posts, coaches and managers." I look forward to the report of our Athletic Commission Chairman and watching a LOT of AL Baseball this summer.

As always, thank you to Rick MacDonald for his leadership and commitment to Scouting! Finally, we will still have Post Americanism reports to hand in and review. If you believe your post has gone above and beyond, then make sure it reflects in your report. Don't be afraid to brag about your contributions to your community. Take the time to build an impressive report, complete with pictures and appropriate brochures. For the 2020 - 2021 membership year, I hope to gather some of the outstanding reports/packages sent in and add them on our website as "examples" or "roadmaps" for others to follow. Normally the Commission holds their annual meeting during "Legion Day" at Boys State, but that isn't possible this year, so I will work with Commander Nelson to come up with a new date. Will most likely take place in June.

I wrap up this report with a huge THANK YOU to all of you who continue to serve your communities, as you served our country. I ask that you work extra hard next year to engage with the youth of our communities in order to overcome this "lost" year.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas D. Harris

Americanism Commission Chairman

Annual Report of the Department Adjutant



Travis Flisrand

Department Commander:

This report is being written and read to satisfy the requirement in the By-Laws that the Department Adjutant write and present at each annual convention, a report covering all activities not covered in the annual reports of Committee Chairs and other State American Legion officials.

The American Legion is a member of the South Dakota Veterans Council, along with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart and the Vietnam Veterans of America. The council meets four times a year to discuss issues involving the Veterans of South Dakota. The council's main goal is to stand together on Legislative bills to better improve the lives of veterans. The endowment for the South Dakota State Cemetery in Sioux Falls was created by the Veterans Council and is managed by the South Dakota Community with the goal of having \$3,000,000 in the endowment by 2023.

The American Legion Foundation is in its tenth year and has a market value of approximately \$200,000. Donations continue to come in on a yearly basis from Legionnaires and Legion Posts. The foundation is a 501c3 tax exempt corporation and can receive donations from any companies and individual donors. The board of directors for the foundation has a goal of having \$1,000,000 in the endowment in 5 years.

State Headquarters Staff had a solid year. Judy Greenfield and MaryJo Boner are the cornerstone to everything in the office and are a great team working together. Assistant Adjutant / Dept. Service Officer Courtney VanZanten continues to be a valued asset to veterans in South Dakota and additional resource at State HQ for services to our membership.

Mr. Commander, since most of the State Officers have filed complete reports published in the June issue of the South Dakota Legion News, most of the activities of the Department have been covered and reported on. With Kevin Hempel taking over as Department Adjutant on May 1, 2020 after my decision to leave the position due to personal reasons, I would like to congratulate you on a very interesting and successful year.

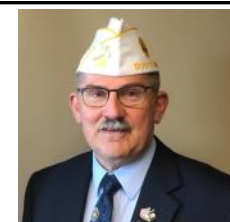
Respectfully submitted,

Travis Flisrand

Past Department Adjutant 2017-2020

Department Adjutant's Corner

Kevin Hempel
Department Adjutant



Hello from the new Department Adjutant, Kevin Hempel. As many of you know, Travis decided to resign as the Department Adjutant and I worked along side him for the last couple of weeks in April learning a great deal about what this position entails. With turnover completed, I officially became the Adjutant on 1 May.

Let me start with some quick background on myself. I was born and raised in South Dakota, attended Sioux Falls Lincoln High School, and am a graduate of SDSU (Go Jacks!) I retired from the U. S. Navy (Go Navy!) after serving proudly for 30 years. I retired as a Captain. At that point, my wife (Robin) and I returned to South Dakota and opened a small custom woodworking business. When the Adjutant's position opened, I applied and was fortunate to be offered the position. I have been a member of the American Legion for 7 years, and although I am considered a new guy to the Legion, my time has been well spent. Almost as soon as joining, I was recruited to be the Post Adjutant, then served as the 2nd Vice, 1st Vice, followed by the Commander. I served as the District Americanism Officer and was elected the District Vice Commander the following year.

As I followed Travis around for the two weeks before I took over, I quickly learned there are a lot of balls to keep in the air and a large learning curve. With that said, I would ask your indulgence as I get comfortable in the seat. It might take me a little longer to get your answers at first, but I am confident it will all fall into place. The office staff (Judy, Mary Jo, and Courtney) are great sources of information and will be keeping me on the right track.

This has been and will be a year of changes. With most Department and National events cancelled until the fall, we need to find alternate ways of doing our business of taking care of Veterans and families, as well as ourselves. We can still conduct our programs; we just need to find innovative ways of getting them done. I encourage Posts to do their buddy checks, especially for their older veterans. See if they need something from the store or need help getting something done at the house. Many times, a simple phone call will let them know they are not forgotten and someone is looking out for them.

That is all for now. Let me close by saying I am really pleased to be your new Adjutant and look forward to working with you and our veterans.

For God and Country,

Kevin Hempel

Department Adjutant

ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Annual Report of the Athletic Commission Chairman



Dan Sudbeck

Mr. Commander:

The SD American Legion Athletic Commission would like to thank all the Posts who hosted Athletic events this past year, for the upcoming events this year and for all the support given to the commission by Department Commander Fred Nelson and all his staff.

Last year events overall went pretty well with not a whole lot of controversy. Special thanks go out to Lennox, Mitchell, Groton and R. C. Post 320 for hosting our 2019 St Tournaments. Congratulations go out to our 2019 winners who are as follows: Lennox-St B Sr, Renner Post 307-St A Sr, Renner Post 307-St A Jr. and Britton/Claremont-St B Jr. We also like to thank the Hartford for hosting our 2019 golf tournament. Congratulation goes out to Nicholas Kemper from S. F. East and Post 15 for being out 2019 Scholarship winner of a \$ 1000 at the state level and another \$ 2500 for being the Central Plains Regional Scholarship winner also. A very fine achievement and to my knowledge our first Regional winner ever.

The 2020 St Tournament host are as follows: Post 131 of Brandon/Valley Springs will host the Class A Sr division; Post 39 of Groton will host the Class B Sr division; Post 15 of S.F. will host the Class A Jr division; and Post 92 of Redfield will host the Class B Jr division. This year annual Golf Tournament will again be hosted by the Posts of both Humboldt and Hartford on Sept 12th-13th. They did a great job last year and said they would do even a better job this year. Again, thanks to all.

At this year's mid-winter meeting the following Posts were awarded St Tournament for the 2021 Season. R.C. Post 22 will be hosting the Class A Sr division between July 23rd thru July 27th; Post 6 of Gregory will be hosting the Class B Sr division between July 29th thru August 2nd; Post 15 of Sioux Falls will be hosting the Class A Jr division between July 23 thru July 27th and Post 60 from Clark will be hosting the Class B Jr division between Aug 6th thru Aug 8th. The 2021 Golf tournament site has not been determined yet so if you're Post would be interested in hosting please contact Elton Blemaster or Gene Gillen. Since the 2020 season has been cancelled it is anticipated that all 2020 site location will be tournament hosts for 2021 season and the awarded sites for 2021 will be pushed back to 2022. Also, all dates are unofficial until I see what Nationals tournament dates are for 2021. This is all unofficial until we have another meeting to decide the final sites and dates on the next 2 years.

What's up as of May 13th 2020? Well, have you heard of this thing called COVID 19? Not only is it raising havoc on the country it is also raising havoc on A.L. Baseball. A few weeks ago we decided we would make a decision on having a baseball season by May 15th due to this COVID 19 thing. Since May 1st we have changed our mind no less than five times. First let's wait and see what's happening with the virus, next we decide we could possibly have a season, and then we changed again thinking it was too big of a risk after listening to all the reports elsewhere but not terrible in SD. At that point I put out a survey to coaches to get their input on the situation and their thoughts of to having a season with some guidelines. The survey comes back overwhelming in favor of going forward with a season. So on May 9th the Athletic Commission along with Commander Nelson had a 2 hr. meeting to decide the fate of our season. The decision was made to have a season by the Athletic Commission with the consent of our Commander and the DEC who was having a meeting that same evening. Guess what, everyone agreed to having a season with some guidelines for the coaches to follow. That evening everything is great until Sunday May 10th at 2:29 PM I receive an email from National Headquarters stating for the 25 States who were still on the fence about having a season that there were shutting down all National support for A.L. Baseball program for the 2020 season. So that shut down our A.L. season for the 2020 year only. Even though we did have our season shut down we still had to have one more emergency meeting to get approval for teams that were still going to play baseball to be able to use the American Legion name and logo (Baseball patches) which is protected under Trademark laws. Approval was granted to use the American Legion name and logo. Thank You!

In conclusion, I know some teams are still going to play baseball and I wish them the best and stay safe. I feel we all thought we were making the correct decision for allowing teams to play under the A.L. umbrella and the number of calls I have been receiving have been nothing but positive for the a 2020 season and the A.L. stance on baseball. We appreciate the positive comments. We tried.

Mr. Commander thank you for all your help and assistance and that concludes my report and on behalf of the Commission it is our pleasure to serve on the committee of the Athletic Commission.

Respectfully Submitted

Dan Sudbeck, Chairman

Annual Report of the Department Historian



Fred Lee

Commander Nelson,

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

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Lee

Department Historian

Annual Report of the Educational Loan Committee Chairman



Hugh Holmes

Mr. Commander,

Two thousand nineteen was an exciting year for the Educational Scholarship Committee. In 2019, we changed from a loan concept to a scholarship format. We invested \$120,000.00 with the South Dakota Community Foundation. Because 2019 is our first year invested, we did not reap any benefits from our invested money.

Our fund's official name is the South Dakota American Legion Scholarship Fund. With the COVID-19 virus, the economy has gone down and hopefully it will recover, but please help the fund by donating.

Applications and brochures are online at www.SDlegion.org. We are revising the 2019 application for 2020.

We had 10 students submit applications for scholarships and were able to award three students with scholarships. We used money that was not invested with SDCF.

The 2020 Educator of the Year is Krissa Korkow, Buchanan School, Huron School District. She is a 1st Grade teacher. She will be honored in the fall when her school is back in session. A short write-up was in the May 13, 2020's Up to Now.

The education scholarships offered by the Department of South Dakota are for post-secondary education, college or technical school, for veterans, children of veterans, and grandchildren of veterans who meet the requirements as set forth in the Education Scholarship brochure. Please read the brochure for all the current changes. In all cases, the veteran must be eligible to join 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 any South Dakota school. The fund is self-sustaining through donations.

Annually, the brochure and application processes are reviewed. No monies were added to the fund from the Department's outside income programs. More specific details can be obtained from State Headquarters, your District Education Loan Chairperson, or a member of the state Education Scholarship Committee. The state committee consists of Jerry Mencke, Huron, Mike Elsberry, Tyndall, and Hugh Holmes, Mitchell.

The Education Scholarship Committee expresses our appreciation for the various memorials and donations received this past year, totaling \$305.00. We also thank the Department Executive Committee, State Headquarters, American Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, and individuals throughout our great state.

Mr. Commander, thank you for selecting me to be the chairman of the Education Scholarship Committee. Airborne!

Respectfully Submitted,

Hugh W. Holmes

Chairman, Education Scholarship Committee

ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Annual Report of the Children and Youth Chairman



Commander,

As our dynamics within the American Legion continue to grow in many ways, the Children & Youth program is following suit. The Temporary Financial Assistance grants are incredibly beneficial gifts that eligible families receive in a trying time. These grants are not only the veteran families last resort, but the stepping stone to help them back on their feet.

If you have a veteran family possibly in need, please take a moment to reach out to them about the Temporary Financial Assistance grant and how to apply if warranted. Applications can be obtained through the Department Headquarters website at <http://www.sdlegion.org/form/sd-american-legion-tfa-form/> or you can contact me at 605-695-9122. Remember the applications start at post level and with YOU! You're the key to connecting us, and I will, with the utmost speed, continue the process of determining eligibility and granting assistance.

Miranda Krumm

www.sdlegion.org/form/sd-american-legion-tfa-form/ or you can contact me at 605-695-9122. Remember the applications start at post level and with YOU! You're the key to connecting us, and I will, with the utmost speed, continue the process of determining eligibility and granting assistance.

The Children & Youth program over the past year or so has had the pleasure of helping several families. In 2019, we had \$1400.00 given out in grants at state level, and \$550.23 at national level. So far, in 2020, we had \$1142.99 given out in grants at state level, and \$2054.29 at national level. Totaling, \$5,147.51 in grants! Utilizing the National Temporary Financial Assistance program for a maximum of \$1,500 first has helped our state Children & Youth account stay alive longer! Remember our account survives solely on donations only. Individual veteran families may receive a one time grant maximum at state and national level.

This last Mid-Winter Convention I focused on raising funds for the hats and mittens project for youth. In one day we raised 88 pairs of winter hats and mittens that were distributed throughout the state by districts to schools in need. THANK YOU! I encouraged leadership from all posts present to go back to their home posts and spread the message that the Children and Youth program (Temporary Financial Assistance program) will continue the hat and mitten project at the 2021 Mid-Winter Convention and to bring donations (hat, mittens, or monetary) and to show support from each and every post no matter how little the donation (or BIG). Togetherness is key!

This past year, as the Children & Youth Chairperson I have grown even more to appreciate each and every youth program, as each one highlights a child's strengths and pushes them towards a brighter future. Encourage your community to explore all these programs as most are no cost to the children. If you need material or information on any of the programs please contact me.

Lastly, thank you for allowing me to serve as the Children and Youth Chairperson. This position has been humbling and rewarding. The satisfaction of helping our youth is priceless.

Respectfully submitted,

Miranda Krumm
Children & Youth Chairman

Annual Report of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chairman



Commander,

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

Warren L. Aas

I am proud to welcome Carole Gregg, member of Rosebud Post #125, as the newest member on our VA&R Commission. We thank Carole for volunteering her time and talent to help make our VA&R program the best we can be.

There are numerous awards every post in our department can win throughout the year and be recognized for their achievement either at our MidWinter Conference or on stage at our annual department convention. There are Americanism awards, Membership awards, and several individual awards Legionnaires can win, but never an award to recognize a post for the good work they do for VA&R. Well that is now changed. One of the major projects our commission has been working on is making all the posts in our department aware of the new VA&R Award for Excellence. This award is open to every post in our department that will recognize one post for their outstanding work and accomplishments in VA&R. All posts can apply for the award and we encourage all posts to submit for the award. The criteria for the award is on our department website and you may also contact our State Headquarters for assistance. The deadline for all applications for this new award is May 1 of each year. The winning post will be recognized on stage at our next state convention. The Department VA&R Commission meets twice per year. Once face-to-face and the other is by teleconference.

Another award your VA&R Commission is working on is submitting our department for the national award called the William F. Lenker National Service Trophy. This is an award our department should be in the running each year but for whatever reason, we never applied for the award. The VA&R Commission is working to make sure our department submits for this award in the future. The winner of this award is recognized on stage at each National Convention. This is one the most prestigious awards presented at our national convention. Wouldn't it be great if the Department of South Dakota is called up on the stage and presented this award? We can do this with your help.

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

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

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

Thank you Commander Nelson for allowing me the privilege to serve as the Chairman of the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission during your year. We encourage all Legionnaires to attend their post meetings. Ask your fellow members if they need a ride to the meeting. You'll be glad you did.

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



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Annual Report of the Department Membership Chairman



Ed Stringer

Commander,

First of all THANK YOU for allowing me to be Membership Chairman for the 2019 - 2020 year. The year has been a challenge for all of us. The COVID19 Virus has given us all a do over to see if we can do it better and correct any mistakes we may have made along the way.

Membership is the back bone of any organization. Without members what is there? I feel that membership should be the first and foremost priority of The American Legion.

We need members to fulfill our obligation to all of our FOUR Pillars. Veterans affairs and Rehab. Children and Youth Americanism and Home Land Security. We as an organization need members to do any thing and every thing. If just half of our 17,323 members would sign-up or renew just one member each, that would give us 8,661 members more than what we have now. Add them to our total now and we would have 25,984 wow.

The American Legion is a changing organization that has allowed more veterans to be eligible for membership with the Legion Act and a few of them are joining. We need to find ways to get more of them. We can not forget the FEMALE And Native American Veterans. They all served as a crucial part of the military and we need to get more of them active in or great organization. The days of this being the good old boys club are gone. As I have heard many times over the past year, try to make all negative situations a positive. This is great advice for all. With this all being said, I will now throw out some numbers. The three year comparison is by districts, Posts over 100% where we all should be. Then the total under minimum of 15.

2018 posts over 100%: Dist. 1 had 7, Dist. 2 had 7, Dist. 3 had 2, Dist. 4 had 3, Dist. 5 had 2, Dist. 6 had 7, Dist. 7 had 7, Dist. 8 had 4 Total of 39

2019 over 100% Dist. 1 had 8, Dist. 2 had 17, Dist. 3 had 2, Dist. 4 had 2, Dist. 5 had 3, Dist. 6 had 5, Dist. 7 had 8, Dist. 8 had 5 Total of 49

2020 Dist. 1 had 7, Dist. 2 had 4, Dist. 3 had 4, Dist. 4 had 2, Dist. 5 had 2, Dist. 6 had 5, Dist. 7 had 8, Dist. 8 had 6 Total of 38

Along with this we had a total of 29 Posts under 15 members.

State wide totals for 2020 are Area 1&2 Kevin Morello, 85.29%, Areas 3-8, Harry Boner 86.63%, Post 500 82.80%, District 1 David Booze 91.86%, District 2 Eugene Iron Shell, 80.22%, District 3 Leroy Madsen 85.33%, District 4 Perry Schmidt 84.56%, District 5 Matt Lagerstrom 83.67%, District 6 Doug Feltman 85.74%, District 7 Rodney Smith 90.30%, District 8 Greg Geiman 88.61%.

I feel we need to get back on track with the monthly Membership team conference calls like last year. More information gets put out in a short time if every one participates.

Again Commander Nelson, THANK YOU for the opportunity to serve as Membership Chairman. I am looking forward to working with everyone for the next Year.

Respectfully Submitted, Ed Stringer Membership Chairman

Post To-Do List

- Submit your Consolidated Post Report by June 30, 2020.
Certify your Post Officers
Recognize your Go-Getters
Perform Buddy Checks on Post Members and Local Vets

Table with columns: POST, NO, % of GOAL. Contains data for Districts 1 through 4, listing various posts and their membership percentages.

Table with columns: POST, NO, % of GOAL. Contains data for various posts and counties including CLAREMONT, COLUMBIA, FREDERICK, GROTON, HECLA, STRATFORD, WARNER, BROWN CO., HERREID, POLLOCK, CAMPBELL CO., BOWDLE, HOSMER, IPSWICH, ROSCOE, EDMUNDS CO., EUREKA, LEOLA, LONG LAKE, McPHERSON CO., MObRIDGE, SELBY, WALWORTH CO., BRENTFORD, CONDE, DOLAND, MANSFIELD, MELLETTE, NORTHVILLE, REDFIELD, TULARE, SPIK CO., CRESBARD, FAULKTON, ROCKHAM, FAULK CO., DISTRICT 5, ANDOVER, GRENVILLE, LILY, PIERPONT, ROSLYN, WAUBAY, WEBSTER, DAY CO., BIG STONE CITY, MILBANK, STRANDBURG, GRANT CO., BRITTON, KIDDER, LANGFORD, VEBLEN, MARSHALL CO., NEW EFFINGTON, OLD AGENCY, ROSHOLT, SISSETON, WILMOT, ROBERTS CO., BRADLEY, CARPENTER, CLARK, RAYMOND, WILLOW LAKE, CLARK CO., WATERTOWN, CODINGTON, ASTORIA, CLEAR LAKE, GARY, TORONTO, DEUEL CO., BRYANT, CASTLEWOOD, ESTELLINE, HAYTI, HAMLIN CO., AURORA, BROOKINGS, BRUCE, ELKTON, SINAI, VOLGA, WHITE, BROOKINGS CO., DISTRICT 6, HITCHCOCK, HURON, VIRGIL, WESSINGTON, WOLSEY, BEADLE CO., ARLINGTON, BADGER, DESMET, ERWIN, HETTLAND, IROQUOIS, LAKE PRESTON, OLDHAM, KINGSBURY CO., CANOVA, HOWARD, MINER CO., PLANCKINTON.

Table with columns: POST, NO, % of GOAL. Contains data for various posts and counties including STICKNEY, WHITE LAKE, AURORA CO., CHAMBERLAIN, KIMBALL, PUKWANA, BRULE CO., GANN VALLEY, BUFFALO CO., ETHAN, MITCHELL, MOUNT VERNON, DAVISON CO., ALEXANDRIA, EMERY, FULL-FRM-EPIPHANY, HANSON CO., ALPENA, WESSINGTON SPRGS, JERAULD CO., ARTESIAN, LETCHER, WOONSOCKET, SANBORN CO., DISTRICT 7, CHESTER, MADISON, NUNDA, RAMONA, WENTWORTH, LAKE CO., COLMAN, EGAN, FLANDREAU, TRENT, MOODY CO., BRIDGEWATER, CANISTOTA, MONTROSE, SALEM, MCCOOK CO., BALTIMORE, BRANDON, COLTON, DELL RAPIDS, GARRETSON, HARTFORD, HUMBOLDT, SIOUX FALLS, RENNER, SIOUX FALLS, VALLEY SPRINGS, MINNEHAHA CO., ALCESTER, BERESFORD, ELK POINT, NORTH SIOUX CITY, UNION CO., CANTON, HARRISBURG, HUDSON, LENNOX, TEA, WORTHING, LINCOLN CO., DISTRICT 8, CENTERVILLE, CHANCELLOR, DAVIS, HURLEY, MARION, PARKER, VIBORG, TURNER CO., AVON, SCOTLAND, SPRINGFIELD, MDSP SPRINGFIELD, TABOR, TYNDALE, BON HOMME CO., GEDDES, GREENWOOD, LAKE ANDES, PICKSTOWN, PLATTE, WAGNER, CHARLES MIX CO., ALSEN, IRENE, VERMILLION, WAKONDA, CLAY CO., ARMOUR, CORSICA, DELMONT, DOUGLAS CO., FREEMAN, MENNO, PARKSTON, TRIPP, HUTCHINSON CO., GAYVILLE, YANKTON, YANKTON CO.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

These Annual Committee Reports are submitted and printed in the South Dakota Legion News in accordance with Article IV, Section 4 of The American Legion Department of South Dakota Constitution.

SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION EDUCATIONAL LOAN COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT		
Balance, 5-1-19		\$129,507.14
RECEIPTS:		
Loan Repayments	\$5,425.94	
Interest	\$19.11	
Memorials and Donations	\$270.00	
	\$5715.05	\$5715.05
TOTAL		\$135,222.19
DISBURSEMENTS:		
SD Community Foundation	\$120,000.00	
Scholarships	\$3500.00	
TOTAL	\$123,500.00	\$123,500.00
Balance, 5-1-20		\$11,722.19

VAVS COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT		
Balance, 5-1-19		\$4,217.75
RECEIPTS:		
From General Fund	\$1,600.00	
Interest	\$1.18	
Memorials and Donations	\$3730.00	
	\$5,331.18	\$5,331.18
TOTAL		\$9,548.93
DISBURSEMENTS:		
VA Facilities	\$5,600.00	
TOTAL	\$5,606.00	\$5,606.00
Balance, 5-1-20		\$3,948.93

ATHLETIC COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT		
Balance, 5-1-19		\$16,894.06
RECEIPTS:		
Entry Fees	\$7,300.00	
Interest	\$4.91	
	\$7,304.91	\$7,304.91
TOTAL		\$24,198.97
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:		
Scholarship	\$500.00	
Commission Expenses	\$5,082.37	
TOTAL	\$5582.37	\$5582.37
Balance, 5-1-20		\$18,616.60

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FINANCIAL REPORT		
Balance, 5-1-19		\$18,647.89
RECEIPTS:		
Memorials and Donations	\$1550.00	
Interest	\$5.07	
TOTAL	\$1555.07	\$1,555.07
		\$20,202.96
DISBURSEMENTS:		
TFA's	\$2,542.99	
TOTAL	\$2,542.99	\$2,543.99
Balance, 5-1-20		\$17,659.97

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN FINANCIAL REPORT		
Budget Amount 2019-2020		\$8,000.00
TOTAL		\$8,000.00
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Committee, Travel & Awards	\$4,627.64	
Balance in Fund, 5-1-20	\$3,372.36	

Annual Report of the National Executive Committeeman



Jim Huls

Welcome to Kevin Hempel as our new Department Adjutant. Kevin comes to us a very well qualified person with great interest in the South Dakota American Legion. We were very fortunate to have many well qualified candidates for the position.

A big thank you to Travis Flisrand for serving the South Dakota American Legion as our Adjutant thru the 100th Anniversary of the American Legion. During his time the South Dakota American Legion had a number of significant accomplishments, namely the 100th Anniversary Float that made two National Conventions, a beautiful South Dakota Centennial Coin that sold well allowing the Department to fund the float and then advanced the South Dakota American Legion Logo on clothing worn by Legionnaires with pride. Travis's contributions to the South Dakota American Legion will be noted for years to come. Thanks again.

Thank You to our office staff for their work during this trying year, Thank you Courtney, Judy and Mary Jo. With Covid-19 arriving in March many things have changed at the State and National Level of the American Legion. At the National Level the Washington Conference held in March was the last face to face meetings held. Everyone was glad to get home without contracting the Virus. The Spring Meetings of the NEC held in May were cancelled, The National Convention to be held in Louisville in August along with the pre- and post convention meetings of the NEC were also cancelled. The Fall Meetings of the NEC are still planned for October 12-15 in Indianapolis. ZOOM is being used for meetings at both the State and National level, what would we do without technology.

All Nationally elected and appointed officers continue serving in their current positions until the close of the next National Convention scheduled in Phoenix from August 27 through September 2, 2021

All national commission and/or committee chairpersons and the current commission and committee members will continue serving in their current position until they resign or are either reassigned or reappointed at the 2021 Fall Meeting in Indianapolis October 12-15 2021. Any resolutions needing to come before the American Legion National Executive Committee, including the re-adoption of our legislative agenda, with the exception of those legislative initiatives that the National Legislative Commission deems to have been fulfilled or are no longer relevant, may be brought forth to the National Executive Committee and subsequently considered and voted on by video meetings, electronic mail or any other allowed means prior to the 2020 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis.

The per capita dues for the American Legion National Organization will remain at \$18.50 for 2021. The next National Commander will be Elected in Phoenix National Convention August 27-September 2, 2021, leading candidates are Paul Dillard (Texas) and Randy Fischer (KY). All National Officers of the American Legion will start a New Year effective with the date that the National Convention would have closed that being September 3, 2020.

Stay Healthy
For God and Country,
Jim Huls NEC

Annual Report of the Internal Affairs Chairman



Mark Weinmann

Commander Nelson, I would like to thank Commander Nelson for appointing me to serve as the Chairman for the Internal Affairs Commission for 2020.

The Internal Affairs Commission met on 14 April 2020 by zoom conference. Present at this conference call were Commander Nelson, Department Adjutant Travis Flisrand, Chairman Mark Weinmann, PDC Byron Callies, PDC Tim Jurgens, and Judge Advocate Gary Schumacher of DeSmet. Annette Dunham of Iroquois was not present.

The Constitution of the American Legion, Department of South Dakota, provides in Article XV, Section 1, that "Any amendment to this constitution may be proposed by any Post, or by the Department Standing Committee on Constitution and Bylaws. Any amendment proposed by a Post shall be submitted in writing to Department Headquarters at least six weeks prior to the annual Department Convention."

"The Department Adjutant shall present it immediately to the Department Commission on Internal Affairs. At least 30 days prior to said convention, the Department Commission on Internal Affairs shall transmit to all Posts, through Department Headquarters, a full copy of all amendments submitted by Posts, together with the favorable or unfavorable recommendation of the committee thereon, with a brief statement of reasons for such recommendation, and at the time the committee shall in like manner, distribute to all Posts, full copy of any proposed amendment originating with the committee itself."

Any resolution pertaining to changes of the constitution and bylaws of the Department of South Dakota American Legion must be submitted to State Headquarters no later than six weeks prior to the state convention, for consideration by the Internal Affairs Commission. The only way the American Legion is able to change, and grow is with resolutions submitted by the local Posts within the Department.

As everybody knows, this is a strange year, and virtually nothing will happen as it should. The Internal Affairs Commission met unofficially by a zoom conference call with a quorum being present. The reason this was an unofficial meeting is because any action taken by this commission would have to be acted on or voted on by the members of this Department of South Dakota American Legion at the State Convention held annually in June.

It has already been decided by our Department Executive Committee that our state convention will not be held this year because of the coronavirus pandemic. If the convention does not meet, then no resolutions could be acted on by the Internal Affairs Commission.

There were several resolutions discussed that will be acted on next year that would change our Constitution and By Laws. These included changing the Department of South Dakota Preamble of our constitution to include All Wars and changing the eligibility to include all veterans who served since December 1941. Delegate dues were discussed as well as some budget items.

Annual reports are welcome from the Sons of the American Legion and The Legion Riders. Sons of the American Legion Commander Terry Hanson informed us that there are six new SAL Squadrons in South Dakota this year, however, there are a few Squadrons still having membership issues. Even so, South Dakota is extremely close to reaching an all-time high in membership. The Sons of the American Legion are a vital part of the American Legion Family and we are very fortunate to have the Sons a big part of our organization. Well done Commander Terry.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Weinmann, Chairman

For God and Country

Patrick Lewellen
Department Chaplain



Greetings American Legion Brothers and Sisters:

For God and Country, let's bow our heads in prayer to remember those who are no longer with us.

I am writing this article today on the 75th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War, VE Day, May 8th 1945, (Victory in Europe). As we remember this time in history we remember our veterans on Memorial Day, a time to honor the men and women who did not return home. It seems like so much has been taken away from us this year with the Coronavirus waging war on our country and the world around us. But our faith in the Lord Jesus has not been taken away and He will get us through this pandemic. Worry less pray more. The Bible says; 2 Chronicles 7:14 *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*

As Legion members we have had so many South Dakota and national meetings and conventions canceled because of Covid-19. This coronavirus has resulted in a huge number of changes in a short amount of time. It's like a perfect storm. There is a verse in the Bible where the disciples were in a storm with Jesus and He calms the sea. Matthew 8:23-27 (NIV) *"Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown!' He replied, 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid?' Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, 'What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!'"* We have to have faith in Jesus that He will calm this storm we are in today.

"Your word is my source of hope" (Psalm 119:114, NLT). Jesus Christ will give us hope today and for the future. He wants us to learn what it means to trust Him and walk with Him every day regardless of the events we face. He wants us to trust Him for every breath, every decision, and every step. Faith in Him points us beyond our problems as we open our hearts to Him. He wants us to learn what it means to trust Him and walk with Him every day regardless of the circumstances of life.

We have so many people who are fearful and are anxious about the unknown. How do we rise to this occasion as Christians? Well, like always, Jesus lights our way. We have to trust in Him and what the Bible tells us. We as believers should never be moved by fear or anxiety. (2Timothy 1:7) says, *"For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* Philippians 4:6-7 *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

I have been praying that we will remember where it all started, that is the United States of America and our American Legacy. We have so much to be grateful for in our American Heritage and our Legacy as we reflect on the past leadership; I am reminded of the beginning of our American Heritage and Legacy that George Washington, one of America's Greatest Hero's was strong in his Christian faith and a Prayer Warrior. America was built on God and Country. We don't have to look very far to see the phrase "In God we trust." I think we know that we're a "Christian" country, and our country and legacy was founded on the Bible.

God has the better plan. (1 Corinthians 14:33) *"For God is not a God of confusion but of peace"*. We must focus everything we have on the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). I have been thinking about how we as a country are going to be remembered in this time in history? Are we going to trust in the Lord and help our fellow man out through this pandemic? The Lord Jesus gives use a very clear message in the Bible.

Mathew 22:36-39. *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"* We will get through this coronavirus pandemic with the Lords help we can do all things through our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray for and help others where you can and the history books will remember our faith and our Good Samaritan deeds. Our prayer is that the Lord will keep all of our essential workers safe and healthy until this coronavirus passes over.

Lord, we lift up prayer for our troops.

Lord, we ask for blessings on our service men and women. We ask protection for all our men and women in uniform both here and around the world. We are grateful for their service and their dedication to keeping our nation safe. We pray that you would keep them safe.

We thank you for our blessings of life and liberty. May our country continually show love and honor to God. May our dedication to you cause us to reach out to all the other nations and people groups with a strong desire for peace and harmony to be displayed whenever possible. We ask all these

Department of South Dakota Taps



Reported to Department HQ
March 25,2020-May 19, 2020

"The legacy of heroes is the memory of a great name and the inheritance of a great example."
Benjamin Disraeli

Post #1	Vermillion	Mark Hansen	Post #74	Brookings	Calvin Vaudrey
Post #2	Tyndall	Robert Bame	Post #76	Veblen	Basil Robertson
Post #3	Chamberlain	Ervin Beckman	Post #88	White	Diane Johnson
Post #7	Huron	Lester Klinkel	Post #92	Redfield	Lyle Crook
Post #8	Pierre	Robert Nystrom	Post #92	Redfield	Dean Dawson
Post #8	Pierre	Kenneth Wilson	Post #92	Redfield	Francis McNeely
Post #11	Wagner	Thomas Beeson	Post #109	Gary	John Weir
Post #11	Wagner	Dale McDaragh	Post #115	Platte	Donavon Mason
Post #12	Yankton	James Franks	Post #116	Alpena	Terry Kludt
Post #12	Yankton	Ray Heinen	Post #116	Alpena	Melvin Schorzmann
Post #15	Sioux Falls	William Clayton	Post #116	Alpena	Iving Wessel
Post #15	Sioux Falls	Robert Kono	Post #120	Isabel	Duane Locken
Post #15	Sioux Falls	Robert Thury	Post #133	Sinai	Dwaine Nelson
Post #15	Sioux Falls	Roger Tibke	Post #142	Tripp	Jerome Boeding
Post #17	Codington Co.	Henry Haan	Post #142	Tripp	Keith Dewald
Post #17	Codington Co.	Richard McNamara	Post #142	Tripp	Henry Prien
Post #18	Mitchell	Michael Meyers	Post #142	Tripp	Gideon Schultz
Post #20	Ft. Pierre	Edward Bergeson	Post #151	Melette	Gary Olson
Post #22	Rapid City	Richard Buckingham	Post #152	Menno	Milton Handel
Post #22	Rapid City	Dean Everson	Post #152	Menno	Arthur Ulmer
Post #22	Rapid City	Vernon Houser	Post #162	Canistota	Orval Lambertz
Post #22	Rapid City	Larry Marchant	Post #171	Strandburg	Bruce Sime
Post #22	Rapid City	Larry Meyer	Post #173	Philip	Rich Millage
Post #22	Rapid City	Stanley Miner	Post #194	Parkston	Leon Edlund
Post #22	Rapid City	Ephriam Sieler	Post #201	Pukwana	Arnold McGhee
Post #22	Rapid City	Perry Ellefson	Post #217	Hayti	Roland Harrington
Post #23	Garretson	Dale Backes	Post #220	Herrick	Willis Anderson
Post #26	Stickney	Wayne Harford	Post #233	Nisland	Elaine Rumph-Geib
Post #31	Lead	Karen Horne-Orose	Post #240	Martin	Roy Milliken
Post #31	Lead	Milton Miller	Post #255	Bison	Robert Crow
Post #32	Belle Fourche	Dean Axtell	Post #258	Andover	Richard Helmer
Post #45	Harrisburg	Carmen Steen	Post #280	Iroquois	Erich Wutsch
Post #50	Sisseton	Merlin Schmidt	Post #317	Allen	Earl Thunderbull
Post #65	Dell Rapids	Frank Colliton	Post #911	Sioux Falls	David Saunders
Post #71	Hot Springs	Richard Overby			
Post #74	Brookings				

things in the name of your beloved son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thank you to all the American Legion Family for allowing me the honor to serve as your Chaplain and I am always available to help. Remember to "Make a Difference" and our history will be written in our hearts. God Bless you!!!! You are in my Prayers!!!!

Chaplain Patrick Lewellen