

The South Dakota Legion News

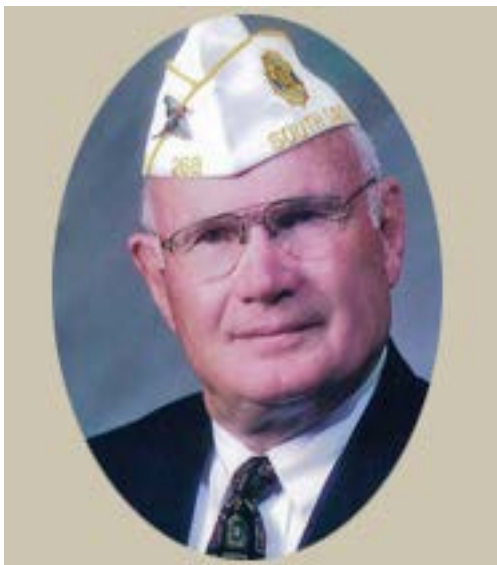


Volume 90, Issue 2

"Veterans Strengthening America"

January 2023

Past Department Commander Gunner Baatrup Reports to Post Everlasting



Gunner Baatrup, age 91, of Huron, passed away peacefully on Thursday, September 8, 2022.

His funeral service was held at 10:30 AM, Friday, September 16th at the First United Methodist Church. Burial including military honors was held in the Broadland Cemetery, Broadland.

Visitation was held from 1:00 to 7:00 PM, Thursday, September 15th at the Kuhler Funeral Home, with his family present from 5:00 to 7:00 PM Thursday evening.

[View Gunner's Funeral Folder](#)

Gunner was born February 3, 1931 in Mitchell, SD, to Chris Baatrup and Laura (Heymeyer) Baatrup. He graduated from Egan High School and received a BA in Economics from Huron College.

Gunner married Gloria LeGrand of Virgil on August 12, 1956.

Gunner served in the US Air Force during the Korean conflict. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before his retirement. Gunner was a dedicated member of the American Legion Schmidt Barnes Post #268 in Virgil. He served as 2006-2007 State Commander of the South Dakota American Legion.

Gunner was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Huron. Gunner felt that "A man should be judged by his deeds." Gunner served on mission trips to Haiti, Russia, Louisiana and Texas. He enjoyed helping people.

Gunner is survived by his wife Gloria, and their four children; Douglas (Linda) Baatrup, Mrs. Hal (Judy) Wrentmore, Mrs. Craig (Lorna) Webb, and Mrs. Gregory (Karen) Szachara; 5 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Honors

- Schmidt-Barnes American Legion Post #268, Virgil, South Dakota
- Huron Veterans Council, Huron South Dakota
- 2006-07 State Commander of South Dakota

MIDWINTER CONFERENCE PREVIEW



(From left) Adjutant Kevin Hempel, former Department Commander Gary Wolkow, Department Auxiliary President Mary Jo Stier and SAL Detachment Commander Casey Hanson listen to National Vice Commander Angel Narvaez's speech at the 2022 MidWinter Conference.

The 2023 MIDWINTER CONFERENCE will be held at the Cross Roads Hotel and Event Center in Huron SD. Dates of the conference are February 10-12. The schedule of events follows:

Friday, February 10, 2023

- 10:00 a.m. Department Finance Commission Meeting
- 12:00 p.m. Registration Desk Opens – Pre-Function Area
- 12:00 p.m. LUNCH BREAK (sandwich buffet available)
- 12:00 p.m. Boys State Board of Directors
- 1:00 p.m. Department Executive Committee Meeting
- 3:00 p.m. SAL Detachment Executive Committee Meeting
- 4:30 p.m. SDAL Foundation Meeting –
- 6:00 p.m. No-Host Cocktails- Pre-Function Area, Conference Center
- 6:30 p.m. Joint Legion / Auxiliary / SAL Banquet

Saturday, February 11, 2023

- 7:30 a.m. Registration Desk Opens – Pre-Function Area
- 8:00 a.m. Joint Opening Session
- 8:30 a.m. Various speakers and reports for joint session
- 8:30 a.m. Boys State Board of Directors Meeting continues
- 10:00 a.m. Recess Joint Session –
- 10:10 a.m. BREAKOUT SESSION 1: MyLegion or Successful Posts
- 11:00 a.m. BREAKOUT SESSION 2: MyLegion cont. or Running a meeting
- 11:45 a.m. LUNCH BREAK (sandwich buffet available)
- 1:00 p.m. BREAKOUT SESSION 3: Security and Scams
- 1:00 p.m. SAL business meeting
- 2:00 p.m. BREAKOUT SESSION 4: Buddy Checks
- 2:45 p.m. Reconvene Joint Session -
- 2:50 p.m. Various speakers and reports
- 4:20 p.m. Announcements and Adjourn Assembly
- 4:30 p.m. Membership Committee meeting
- 4:30 p.m. American Legion Rider meeting
- 6:00 p.m. Go-Getter Reception (National Guard building)
- 7:00 p.m. Go-Getter Smorgasbord
- 8:00 p.m. Hospitality Rooms, Arrowwood Resort Hotel rooms

Sunday, February 12, 2023

- 8:30 a.m. Non-Denominational Service Four Chaplains
- 10:30 a.m. SD American Legion – State Finals – Oratorical Contest



Hotel and Banquet Information

A block of rooms has been set aside and reservations can be made by calling 800-876-5858. There are no more rooms available for Thursday evening, but about 25 rooms for Friday and Saturday. Be sure to mention you will be attending the Legion MidWinter conference. An alternate hotel is the Super 8 in Huron.

The MidWinter Joint Banquet will be held Friday evening February 10th with social at 6:00 and banquet at 6:30. The meal will be a buffet with roast beef, chicken marsala, baked potato, green bean almondine, tossed salad, dinner roll and cookies and cream salad. Cost is \$35.00 and deadline to order tickets is February 1st. Checks should be sent to Lloyd Timperley, P.O. Box 205, Huron SD 57350 and made out to American Legion Post 7.

A sandwich and soup buffet will be available for both Friday and Saturday lunches. Price will be \$17.00 each which includes tax and gratuity. No advanced tickets are required, it will be pay as you go. The Go Getters event will be held at the Huron National Guard Armory, 1030 3rd Street SW in Huron. There will be buses going from the hotel to the armory and returning.

MidWinter Joint Banquet

- **When:** 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10
- **On the Menu:** roast beef, chicken marsala, baked potato
- **Cost:** \$35 a ticket
- **Deadline:** February 1

Daily Lunches

- **When:** 12 p.m. Fri. and Sat.
- **On the Menu:** sandwich and soup buffet
- **Cost:** \$17 a ticket
- **No advanced tickets**

(Left) Legionaires reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance" at the 2022 MidWinter Conference.

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Find Post Information here: <https://www.sdlegion.org/district-posts-maps/>
Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sdamericanlegion/>

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Winter Update

Doug Feltman
Department Commander



It has been five months into my term as Commander of the largest and best Veterans Service Organization in the nation and I am very proud to be it's Commander. It has been said that time flies when you are having fun and I can sure agree with that. Time is flying by and I certainly am having fun. I have traveled around the state and met many, many of the finest people in the world, our American Legion Family. It makes no difference if I am at a larger Post or one of the smaller Posts, the Legion family is working to support our veterans and our communities. There is a lot going on in The American Legion in South Dakota now. Your training team is working very hard to get a SD Legion College started and the first class is scheduled for April 2023. The Public Safety Committee is working on an EMT of The Year award that will honor our hard working and dedicated EMTs that are not a certified firefighter. A job description for District Commanders is in the works with the goal of providing prospective District Commanders a preview of what that rewarding job will entail. We are in the process of increasing participation in The Legion's shooting sports program and generating more participation in the Oratorical Contest. And let's not forget Boys State, Girls State and the Youth Trooper Academy. Our officers and Executive committee can lead and assist in encouraging participation in these programs but "where the rubber meet the road" is with our Legion Family in their community's promoting and encouraging young people to become involved in the many programs that The American Legion has.

The SD Legislative session starts in January and your Legislative committee in concert with the Sought Dakota Veterans Council is working on 3 areas that are very important to our veterans across the state. The explanation is lengthy so if you can contact a member of the legislative committee, they will explain what they are working on. There were 4 legislative round tables held across the state where we met with Legislators but again "where the rub-

ber meets the road" is with you, please contact your legislators and encourage them to support our efforts for our veterans and thank them for their past support.

Rod Smith and his membership team are doing a great job, they have the momentum going and as this is written we are #1 in the Nation. With that said we all know that membership slows down dramatically after the first of the year. Please let's keep the momentum going and not slack off.

Now the "Old Man" needs some help. Dan Brown is North Dakota's Department Commander and he has agreed to a membership challenge. I have challenged Dan to a steak supper for the Department Commander and their wife with the highest membership percentage on 17 May 2023 which is Nationals 100% goal day. Let's work together and have North Dakota buy some great South Dakota beef. I know that working together we can do it.

The Legion Family is working great together, the SAL is signing up Legion members and Legion members are signing up Auxiliary and SAL members. Remember "building a stronger family" can only be a plus for each of our family groups.

And, let's not forget the Legion Insurance Trust. That is the \$1,000 accidental death life insurance (\$5,000 if on Legion business) that each member has and is part of your dues. You only have to sign up once and as long as your dues are current you have the insurance coverage. The Department gets a dividend based on the number of members signed up for the insurance. Currently about half of our members have signed up, take advantage of this benefit of being a Legion member, help your family and the Department.

Until next time, keep doing what you are doing and Thank You for what you do for The American Legion.

God bless our Veterans and God Bless America.

Doug Feltman
Commander

From the Adjutant

Kevin Hempel
Department Adjutant



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. It is hard to believe this calendar year is almost over and the Legion year is almost half over. The department has been doing a great job on membership for 2023 so far. However, with that said, we typically begin to lose momentum after the first of the year, so I ask each of you to keep up the push. We have been #1 in the nation of all departments for the last several months. I would really like to see us keep it up. Many of you have heard this before, but it is just not numbers, but the memberships keep our programs going and gives us a tremendous voice in congress.

The MidWinter conference is coming up in February. There will be some great training given as well as some good speakers for information. The training will include MyLegion for Post officers, specifically the Commanders and Adjutants. Other topics will include what makes a successful post, running a meeting, scams and security as well what is and how to do buddy checks. The schedule and other important information are included in this Legion News. You can also find information in the latest Up To Now.

South Dakota is starting its own Department Legion College. The first session will be done online and will be taking 20 students. Additional information will be presented at the MidWinter conference and can also be found in this edition of the Legion News.

The Department is trying something new. We typically do a sweepstakes fund raiser for both the MidWinter and Department Convention. We normally use a fund-raising company, but it costs the department a fair amount of money to use the outside company. For this MidWinter, we are trying to do the fundraising in house so if you have not seen the sweepstakes letter yet, you should see it soon. Please consider supporting the department by participating in the sweepstakes.

Kevin Hempel
Department Adjutant


THE AMERICAN LEGION
Veterans Strengthening America
OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER

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From the National Commander

Jim Troiola

To my fellow Legionnaires in South Dakota, The American Legion achieved an enormous victory in the 117th Congress. Thanks to the hard work and advocacy of Legionnaires from around the globe, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act is now the law of the land! It passed because elected officials heard from members of your department who understood the harmful effects that environmental hazards and burn pits can have on veterans. Like any legislation of this scope, implementation will be a challenge. On a national level, we will continue to lobby the administration, Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to do right by America's veterans. On a local level, we will continue to rely on our excellent service officers to ensure that veterans and their families are able to access their benefits.

No issue is more important to our American Legion Family than preventing veteran suicide. I am asking you all to "Be the One" to save one. Through buddy checks, outreach and dialogue we can destigmatize the issue. Veterans value courage and it takes courage to seek help. If we each focus on saving one life, we will

collectively save thousands.

Most kindergartners learn how to use the 911 emergency line. The Suicide Crisis Line has now been simplified to 988 (extension 1 for veterans). Let's spread the word about it. A 988 call today can prevent a 911 call tomorrow.

In November, the American people spoke. They elected our new 118th Congress. It is important that your senators and representatives hear from you. Visit our national website, www.legion.org, to find out the issues that are important to The American Legion. Our influence in Washington is only possible because of the engagement that American Legion Family members undertake with their elected officials.

I thank you for your service to America and The American Legion. Best wishes for a productive conference.

For God and Country,
Vincent "Jim" Troiola
National Commander

Birthplace of American Legion Baseball



The Milbank post and the town of Milbank are building a new baseball complex. More than just the baseball fields and grandstands, they will be honoring the traditions of both the American Legion and American Legion Baseball. They have put together a video of what they are doing which can be seen at this link. <https://vimeo.com/spotmpg/review/769677248/ce774a06fb> They would certainly appreciate any financial assistance a post or individual may be able to help with.

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Legion News
"Veterans Strengthening America" 2023

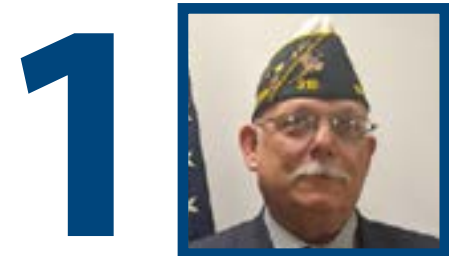
Read the Legion News online!

Upcoming 2023 publications:
March
June
September

Don't Miss It!



District Commander Updates



Jon McDonald, Box Elder

Hello District 1 Family,

My family and I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving, and we send our season's greetings and wish everyone a happy New Year! I ask that all posts contact your members to let them know you're thinking of them during this holiday season and to ensure they are taken care of. There are also several posts collecting food donations to provide to their local communities in need. If you know of a post who is doing this, please participate if you're able, whether by donation or volunteering. I would also like to give a heartfelt thank you to the posts who placed wreaths for our brothers and sisters at the Black Hills National Cemetery; you are not forgotten.

The Mid-Winter Convention will occur in Huron in February 2023. I ask that our district has a great showing this coming year, I know the training department will be providing valuable training to the attendees. This is also a great time for us to see our friends, while making new ones. Please use the convention as an opportunity to spread the message of what your post has planned for 2023.

Our spring district meeting will be on March 25th, 2023, location TBD at this time. We will be electing new district and county leadership at this meeting so please attend and use this opportunity to meet all those who are nominated.

If you have any upcoming events that you would like to have socialized contact myself, or ADJ Booze, to have it added to the District Facebook Page and District-wide email.

Remember "Be the One,"
Commander Jon



James Pekron, Mitchell

Hello from District 6. It's been six months since I became the District 6 Commander. It's been a learning experience. We had a great turnout for our fall district meeting. I have also attended our monthly zoom meetings. A lot of information is given to us from the Dept. Commander and Dept. Adjutant. Also it's helpful for our new district officers to hear what other Dist. Commanders are doing. Annette Dunham from Iroquois has taken on the position of District Adjutant, but I am still looking for someone for Children and Youth and VAVS. Our next project is the Oratory Contest. We are working with our posts to contact the schools to get contestants. Just a reminder that the Mid Winter meeting will be held in Huron on February 10-12, 2023. The District Spring Meeting will be held on March 19, 2023. I am in the process of trying to find a post to host this meeting. If any posts are interested, please contact me as soon as possible. I want to thank my Vice Commanders for all their help these past months. In closing I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.



Christopher Rendon, Rapid City

District 2 Legionnaires,

American novelist Wallace Stegner once said, "Another fall, another turned page." That rings true with our district. I want to thank Post 173 of Philip for hosting our Fall convention. Also, for those who marched in parades, who led community programs, gave speeches and provided meals for our vets on their special day called Veterans Day, I sincerely thank you.

Yes, we have been busy. Some of our posts have reached 100 percent membership this year. While some other posts had friends go on to their post everlasting, this year's goal seems impossible. I want to encourage you to be active in your community, do those buddy checks, if help is dial 988. A person from the National Suicide and crisis hotline will be there and able to help you. Lastly, spend time gathering together.

Finally, the oratorical contest for district 2 will be January 8, 2023, at the School of Mines in the classroom building at 10:00 am. You are always welcome to join. Also, please note the Youth Trooper Academy deadline for accepting candidates is March 25, 2023. Our Spring district convention will be on March 26, I am currently working on a location, keep an eye on the newsletter "Up to Now" for more information.

In January, I will be on the trail again visiting posts. I have had the opportunity to visit several so far and it has been great to connect with all of you. I look forward to seeing you all in the near future.



Patrick Mullen, Madison

It is time again for an update and information concerning our District. Needless to say, Post visits are always on everyone's minds and I for one enjoy the fellowship and positive atmosphere in District 7. Currently out of the eight Districts in the State with respect to membership we are in sixth place. Same place that we were in last year at this time. We will get there again I have confidence in all because you are the greatest.

I always like to talk and inform everyone about the good things that are happening and this one is truly a success in my world. The Egan Post # 97 was having a hard time with membership and thought that should we consolidate with another post. So, we scheduled a meeting and I in my infinite wisdom went in with the idea that we would be thinking about a consolidation. Had a letter concerning that etc. Wrong there Auxiliary and the Post decided we are not quitting we are going to grow I'm so proud of this group from a negative they now have new members have surpassed their goal and are at 129.20%. What this shows me that we in each post have the ability to make positive change when we want. There is a lot of negative out there and if allowed it will affect us myself included.

Now for the Challenge, District 7 I have a BEARD that has been part of me for 40+ years, and when once again we finish in first place for membership and at the State Convention at Arrow Head Convention Center, Dan Wyatt from Post # 25 will shave my beard. So that being said remember have fun each day enjoy life to the fullest God Bless each of you.



Gene Opbroek, Gregory

As I write this it is snowing outside, although it means some shovel work tomorrow that's ok the moisture is greatly appreciated.

Oratorical time is just around the corner so make sure you are keeping in touch with the school and students. Have them keep practicing in front of different people so they get accustomed to it. It will not be such a shock to them later.

Buddy Checks is an ongoing program. Make sure to have a plan in place to check on your local veterans. Nationally we are still losing 22 veterans a day to suicide. All it takes is a phone call! This is also the time of year that we need to check on our veterans and make sure they have food, shelter and warm clothing. Also they may need transportation to get to the grocery store, doctor appointments etc. We must always remember that our responsibility is to give back to the community.

Membership must always be on our minds. We still have some Posts in District 3 that are not at 75%. Those Posts need to get going and start calling or visiting with members to get their numbers where they are supposed to be. If you have not gotten your membership team together to make phone calls DO IT NOW!!

Please try to attend some of the local Christmas events in your community if you can. Kids love to see us at their concerts, ball games etc. Pat them on the back, tell them they had a good game or they played hard. It always means more coming from someone besides mom and dad.

Keep up the hard work. It is greatly appreciated by all of us. God bless, stay safe!



Bob Thomason, Selby
www.facebook.com/SDLegion4

"Post commander: "A POW/MIA empty chair is placed at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of many American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. This is a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor!"

I took this out of the Post Officer's Guide. This quote should be being read at the opening of ALL meetings of The American Legion. In light of recent events, I felt it relevant to share.

We recently learned about the remains of Army Staff Sergeant Walter Nies, a WWII bomber tail gunner, being returned to be laid to rest at a rural cemetery at Eureka, South Dakota.

While looking at news headlines over lunch the other day, out of the corner of my eye, I caught a very small headline. It was about another set of remains coming home to America for proper burial. While following that thread, I found a couple more soldiers whose remains have recently been found. I find it sad that these events are more often buried in the news, instead of being HEADLINERS.

Legionnaires, let's "rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor!"

Bob Thomason
District 4 Commander

DEPT. VICE COMMANDER UPDATES



Districts 3-8

Courtney Steffen
Vice Commander

Greetings Legionnaires!

It's been a busy season for me in the Service Officer world with the PACT Act coming into full swing. If you haven't explored what benefits opened up with its passage, please do yourself a favor and read up! That expansive piece of legislation should leave nearly every Veteran assuming nothing. Especially important right now is the window of opportunity open for those Southwest Asia Theater of Operations Veterans who deployed prior to 2013—you have until October 2023 to get into the VA regardless of income or disability status and document any illnesses or ailments that are tied to your deployments. Enroll today by going to your local County or Tribal Veterans Service Officer.

It's been a privilege to represent the Department at a multitude of events across the Eastern side the last two months, to include a unique visit to the South Dakota State Penitentiary. I must

say, not a place I ever imagined I'd visit, but was glad to have had the opportunity. I heard a number of stories of their service, on the circumstances that led them to where we were, and most importantly, the hope they had for a better future. I was impressed with the camaraderie within the Post. And the importance of the Legion in that scenario: it provided a purpose. They were there for each other. In a way, by being a member, they were here for you. They were part of a bigger picture. It provided hope. It provided purpose. And I loved seeing it.

I'm working my way around different Posts, and am filling up my calendar in the upcoming months. If there is something I can attend, please reach out and let's get it scheduled!

Happy holidays, Legion family!
Courtney Steffen
Vice Commander, 3-8



Districts 1-2

Doug Harris
Vice Commander

Greetings once again to my fellow Legionnaires from "West River" and across the State!

The months since my last update have been VERY busy. In August, Post 22 and I hosted the western Honor Flight training event for the Guardians of the last 3 mission (11-13) of 2022. Following that, I travelled to Milwaukee WI for the National Convention where I was a delegate and represented SD on the Americanism Commission. The best part of that was the fact that SD had a Resolution in the mix, and I was able to make the motion to move it forward into the Americanism Commission for further study.

In September, the Fall District meetings started, and I was able to travel up to Lemmon SD (a beautiful small town along the ND border) for the district 1 meeting. I didn't even hit any of the local wildlife "this time". I also helped organize and attended a large gathering of Vietnam Veterans and their families at Post 22 in Rapid City where Congressman Dusty Johnson honored their service and presented them with a coin and certificates of appreciation. It was a truly impressive and heartfelt event. I visited Post 303 in Hermosa this month to take part in their Flag Retirement Ceremony, recognition of their 50- and 55-year members, as well as a Post Everlasting Ceremony recognizing their fallen comrades. Following that, everything went on hold due to acquiring the Corona Virus (minor event for me, thank God...I'm not as young as I used to be). During the last week of the month, I represented the SDAL during the visit of the National ALA President at Post 315 in Box Elder. Box Elder always serves a very tasty meal and makes their guests feel welcome. Also, that week, Post 22 hosted the SD Veterans Council, so I helped organize the location and had the opportunity to meet and talk with the many representatives from the different groups and supporting organizations. All in all, a very busy month.

In October I had the exceptional honor to join several of my fellow Legionnaires as a Guardian during the SD American Legion Honor Flight. I can't imagine any other event that so successfully shows gratitude and respect for our Veterans. This event is completely "over the top" from the first night's banquet, all through the trip to DC the next day and the return home to a packed stadium of family, friends, and well-wishers that evening. For those who felt unwelcome when they returned from war, I certainly hope that this helped make up for it. I couldn't possibly have been more impressed and thankful to have been able to take part. This event was paid for by the approximately \$183,000 in donations generated by Posts around the state. Thank you all for your generosity and hard work! The following weekend I travelled to Indianapolis IN, for the National Fall meetings where I once again represented us in the Americanism Commission meetings. While a lot of work takes place, there's also a LOT of socializing with candidates for National Commander, Past National Commanders, and current State Commanders/Adjutants and Commission members. I gathered so many state commander cap pins, I had to buy another cap just to have a place to put

them. It was an opportunity to join other representatives from around the nation and exchange ideas on how to make The American Legion an even better organization than it already is. The month culminated with a trip to Vermillion SD, where I was invited to march in the USD Homecoming Parade with Post 1 members and hand out U.S. flags to both little and "big" children. That was also a first for me and I very much enjoyed it. Thank you, District 8 Commander, Joseph Knoer for the invitation.

The month of November saw me in Sturgis SD for The Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair. I figured they would want me to work while I was there, but the group who planned it (Micheline Nelson was on the organizing committee) did such a great job, all I had to do was walk around and chat with people. I followed that later in the day by judging the chili contest at Box Elder Post 315. Now that's a job I can really "sink my teeth into". The contest winner and a huge supporter of the Post was the mayor of the fast-growing city of Box Elder. I also made a visit to Post 46 in Custer SD, where I joined SAL Detachment Commander, Casey Hansen, Vice Commander Shane Lamer and several other SAL dignitaries who were there to swear in the new Post 46 and Hot Springs Post 71 SAL Officers. It's always a joy to travel into the Black Hills and see the beauty of our State. Enough about my travels and how much fun I'm having, let's move on to business.

Membership: When I checked a couple of days ago, SD was in first place for membership and with all of you busy recruiting your friends and neighbors, we can maintain that place for the remainder of the year. You've heard this a million times (ok, maybe only 500,000), but each Legion family member is also a recruiter! Don't be shy, ask the question, "are you a veteran, and if so, how about joining our organization?" Quite often you will be told "no thanks", but if you ask 10 people, I'll bet at least one of them says "yes, sign me up!" Do the math...ask 100 people and sign-up 10+. It's also the holiday season, so PLEASE, help your Post do Buddy Checks. Make sure your members are doing "ok", and if not, help them out.

Americanism: I would probably be accused of being an imposter if I didn't talk about the upcoming Americanism programs. The Oratorical contests begin shortly at the Post level, followed a month later at the District Level and then the State Competition during the Midwinter Conference in February, so hopefully you've recruited contestants. It's always a joy to watch these young people teach us a bit about our Constitution and their understanding of its different parts. Following that, the recruitment for Boys State, Girls State, and Youth Trooper Academy continues in earnest. I cannot wait to meet these young men and women, our future leaders!

If there's a special event, or just a Post meeting you would like me to attend, please reach out: my email is doughnut@gmail.com and my phone # is 970-231-8556. Finally, thank you all for the time, effort, and dedication each of you put into our incredible organization!

Do YOU have what it takes? 2023 YOUTH TROOPER ACADEMY

JUNE 26-30, 2023 ★ PIERRE, SD

Are you interested in law enforcement? The Youth Trooper Academy provides an intensive weeklong experience at the South Dakota Law Enforcement Training Center in Pierre, SD. Veteran Troopers provide mentorship and hands-on training in the following areas:

- firearms safety
- defensive driving
- crash investigation
- traffic stops
- leadership
- defensive tactics
- criminal law

Applicants must be high school juniors or seniors in good academic standing. The program utilizes a paramilitary approach, and is therefore physically and mentally demanding. Be prepared!

TO APPLY:

Check out <http://www.sdlegion.org/program/sd-youth-trooper-academy> for more information and qualifications. Applications can be found on the website, with any state trooper, your guidance counselor or at your local American Legion. **Application deadline is March 25, 2023.**

Applicants are encouraged to apply early, as space is limited

SAVE the DATE 2023 National Convention

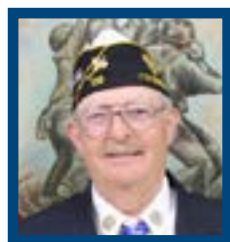
Charlotte, North Carolina

August 25-31

All hotel reservations must go through Department Headquarters.

Contact Kevin Hempel at 605-886-3604 or adjutant@sdlegion.org to book rooms at the Hyatt Place Charlotte Downtown.

Membership & Post Activities



From the Chair

Rod Smith

At this time, we are doing good as a Department. Several Districts are doing well. There is a lot of room for renewals to reach the 100% mark among some Post. The goal for every Post is 75% by December and should be doable for all of us. If you like you can go to legion.org and log in or Register. There is a renew button on the Membership menu and you can also sign up for autopsy so it will come out every year automatically. Let's finish our calendar year by getting the dues paid online or through your Post. The Legion family are all recruiters and if you sign up three new members you can get a pin from National Commander Troiola. You can get another pin if you sign up five past members who were not members in 2022. You can download the forms from the legion.org website. Type Commanders pins in the search box and it will take you to the forms. Keep up your good work in your Post, community, State and Nation.

Rod Smith

Membership Chairman

| POST | GOAL | MBSHP | % GOAL | POST | GOAL | MBSHP | % GOAL | POST | GOAL | MBSHP | % GOAL | POST | GOAL | MBSHP | % GOAL |
|------|------|-------|---------|------|------|-------|---------|------|------|-------|---------|------|------|-------|---------|
| #1 | 57 | 47 | 82.46% | #88 | 103 | 81 | 78.64% | #186 | 90 | 76 | 84.44% | #283 | 122 | 93 | 76.23% |
| #2 | 53 | 47 | 88.68% | #89 | 22 | 20 | 90.91% | #187 | 12 | 11 | 91.67% | #284 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #3 | 88 | 73 | 82.95% | #91 | 29 | 21 | 72.41% | #189 | 68 | 58 | 85.29% | #285 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #4 | 94 | 81 | 86.17% | #92 | 159 | 113 | 71.07% | #193 | 42 | 28 | 66.67% | #286 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #5 | 37 | 37 | 100.00% | #93 | 52 | 33 | 63.46% | #194 | 114 | 96 | 84.21% | #287 | 7 | 4 | 57.14% |
| #6 | 91 | 76 | 83.52% | #94 | 37 | 29 | 78.38% | #198 | 47 | 24 | 51.06% | #289 | 11 | 9 | 81.82% |
| #7 | 265 | 238 | 89.81% | #96 | 28 | 24 | 85.71% | #200 | 31 | 21 | 67.74% | #290 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #8 | 313 | 240 | 76.68% | #97 | 15 | 19 | 126.67% | #201 | 12 | 13 | 108.33% | #291 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #9 | 120 | 98 | 81.67% | #99 | 10 | 9 | 90.00% | #206 | 31 | 22 | 70.97% | #292 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #10 | 11 | 11 | 100.00% | #100 | 75 | 59 | 78.67% | #207 | 44 | 29 | 65.91% | #293 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #11 | 171 | 145 | 84.80% | #102 | 40 | 28 | 70.00% | #209 | 45 | 40 | 88.89% | #294 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #12 | 230 | 146 | 63.48% | #103 | 20 | 17 | 85.00% | #210 | 39 | 32 | 82.05% | #295 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #13 | 101 | 91 | 90.10% | #105 | 13 | 10 | 76.92% | #213 | 38 | 34 | 89.47% | #296 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #14 | 100 | 81 | 81.00% | #106 | 11 | 10 | 90.91% | #216 | 20 | 13 | 65.00% | #297 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #15 | 1480 | 1163 | 78.58% | #108 | 10 | 8 | 80.00% | #217 | 39 | 32 | 82.05% | #298 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #16 | 17 | 14 | 82.35% | #109 | 124 | 95 | 76.61% | #220 | 35 | 29 | 82.86% | #299 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #17 | 466 | 384 | 82.40% | #110 | 43 | 42 | 97.67% | #229 | 163 | 127 | 77.91% | #300 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #18 | 306 | 243 | 79.41% | #111 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% | #230 | 37 | 30 | 81.08% | #301 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% |
| #19 | 15 | 12 | 80.00% | #113 | 27 | 26 | 96.30% | #233 | 24 | 14 | 58.33% | #302 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% |
| #20 | 92 | 64 | 69.57% | #114 | 101 | 82 | 81.19% | #235 | 44 | 29 | 65.91% | #303 | 122 | 93 | 76.23% |
| #21 | 34 | 26 | 76.47% | #115 | 74 | 64 | 86.49% | #237 | 40 | 30 | 75.00% | #304 | 55 | 44 | 80.00% |
| #22 | 564 | 455 | 80.67% | #116 | 22 | 21 | 95.45% | #238 | 11 | 5 | 45.45% | #307 | 54 | 1 | 1.85% |
| #23 | 209 | 172 | 82.30% | #117 | 19 | 17 | 89.47% | #239 | 6 | 4 | 66.67% | #308 | 54 | 1 | 1.85% |
| #24 | 449 | 366 | 81.51% | #118 | 131 | 99 | 75.57% | #240 | 90 | 62 | 68.89% | #310 | 6 | 2 | 33.33% |
| #25 | 163 | 116 | 71.17% | #120 | 27 | 25 | 92.59% | #241 | 18 | 18 | 100.00% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #26 | 46 | 31 | 67.39% | #121 | 35 | 27 | 77.14% | #242 | 14 | 13 | 92.86% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #27 | 29 | 20 | 68.97% | #122 | 24 | 23 | 95.83% | #246 | 31 | 26 | 83.87% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #28 | 20 | 22 | 110.00% | #124 | 9 | 7 | 77.78% | #248 | 15 | 14 | 93.33% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #29 | 51 | 34 | 66.67% | #125 | 24 | 31 | 129.17% | #249 | 40 | 30 | 75.00% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #30 | 1 | 1 | 100.00% | #128 | 90 | 71 | 78.89% | #250 | 71 | 55 | 77.46% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #31 | 104 | 68 | 65.38% | #129 | 47 | 33 | 70.21% | #251 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #32 | 39 | 32 | 82.05% | #130 | 54 | 32 | 59.26% | #253 | 27 | 18 | 66.67% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #33 | 294 | 217 | 73.81% | #131 | 82 | 62 | 75.61% | #255 | 35 | 28 | 80.00% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #35 | 37 | 29 | 78.38% | #132 | 64 | 51 | 79.69% | #256 | 24 | 6 | 25.00% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #36 | 30 | 27 | 90.00% | #133 | 6 | 6 | 100.00% | #257 | 5 | 17 | 340.00% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #37 | 52 | 48 | 92.31% | #134 | 46 | 31 | 67.39% | #258 | 9 | 5 | 55.56% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #38 | 46 | 44 | 95.65% | #135 | 96 | 82 | 85.42% | #259 | 46 | 40 | 86.96% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #39 | 49 | 43 | 87.76% | #136 | 95 | 61 | 64.21% | #260 | 23 | 23 | 100.00% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #40 | 151 | 122 | 80.79% | #137 | 49 | 42 | 85.71% | #261 | 115 | 104 | 90.43% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #41 | 38 | 19 | 50.00% | #138 | 151 | 119 | 78.81% | #262 | 37 | 33 | 89.19% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #42 | 226 | 170 | 75.22% | #139 | 23 | 18 | 78.26% | #264 | 39 | 36 | 92.31% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #43 | 69 | 47 | 68.12% | #140 | 95 | 71 | 74.74% | #265 | 2 | 0 | 0.00% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #44 | 32 | 28 | 87.50% | #141 | 17 | 17 | 100.00% | #266 | 62 | 42 | 67.74% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #45 | 99 | 76 | 76.77% | #142 | 59 | 50 | 84.75% | #267 | 30 | 28 | 93.33% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #46 | 93 | 82 | 88.17% | #143 | 22 | 14 | 63.64% | #268 | 29 | 15 | 51.72% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #47 | 17 | 16 | 94.12% | #144 | 4 | 3 | 75.00% | #269 | 15 | 1 | 6.67% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #48 | 22 | 19 | 86.36% | #145 | 94 | 87 | 92.55% | #273 | 17 | 13 | 76.47% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #49 | 77 | 62 | 80.52% | #146 | 84 | 67 | 79.76% | #274 | 47 | 36 | 76.60% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #50 | 217 | 208 | 95.85% | #147 | 29 | 22 | 75.86% | #276 | 18 | 14 | 77.78% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #52 | 37 | 31 | 83.78% | #148 | 63 | 48 | 76.19% | #278 | 26 | 21 | 80.77% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #53 | 38 | 31 | 81.58% | #149 | 17 | 17 | 100.00% | #279 | 74 | 56 | 75.68% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #56 | 55 | 45 | 81.82% | #150 | 33 | 29 | 87.88% | #280 | 64 | 60 | 93.75% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #57 | 29 | 16 | 55.17% | #151 | 21 | 15 | 71.43% | #281 | 2 | 0 | 0.00% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #58 | 36 | 32 | 88.89% | #152 | 96 | 74 | 77.08% | #282 | 18 | 15 | 83.33% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #59 | 40 | 26 | 65.00% | #153 | 15 | 10 | 66.67% | #283 | 93 | 64 | 68.82% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #60 | 60 | 53 | 88.33% | #154 | 110 | 95 | 86.36% | #287 | 7 | 4 | 57.14% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #61 | 31 | 27 | 87.10% | #155 | 31 | 28 | 90.32% | #289 | 11 | 9 | 81.82% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #62 | 66 | 50 | 75.76% | #156 | 13 | 7 | 53.85% | #292 | 20 | 16 | 80.00% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #63 | 141 | 112 | 79.43% | #157 | 19 | 19 | 100.00% | #294 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #64 | 29 | 22 | 75.86% | #158 | 9 | 7 | 77.78% | #295 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #65 | 184 | 147 | 79.89% | #159 | 83 | 74 | 89.16% | #297 | 2 | 2 | 100.00% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #66 | 110 | 75 | 68.18% | #160 | 28 | 16 | 57.14% | #298 | 18 | 14 | 77.78% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #67 | 28 | 22 | 78.57% | #161 | 21 | 21 | 100.00% | #299 | 49 | 28 | 57.14% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #68 | 24 | 24 | 100.00% | #162 | 31 | 17 | 54.84% | #301 | 13 | 9 | 69.23% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #69 | 27 | 18 | 66.67% | #164 | 207 | 146 | 70.53% | #302 | 20 | 1 | 5.00% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #70 | 36 | 26 | 72.22% | #166 | 14 | 13 | 92.86% | #303 | 122 | 93 | 76.23% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #71 | 266 | 193 | 72.56% | #167 | 13 | 12 | 92.31% | #307 | 55 | 44 | 80.00% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #72 | 90 | 68 | 75.56% | #169 | 290 | 229 | 78.97% | #308 | 54 | 1 | 1.85% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #74 | 157 | 130 | 82.80% | #170 | 42 | 31 | 73.81% | #310 | 6 | 2 | 33.33% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #75 | 34 | 21 | 61.76% | #171 | 17 | 12 | 70.59% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #76 | 53 | 52 | 98.11% | #172 | 20 | 16 | 80.00% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% | #314 | 45 | 3 | 6.67% |
| #77 | 18 | 12 | 66.67% | #173 | 64 | 56 | 87.50% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% | #315 | 106 | 70 | 66.04% |
| #78 | 83 | 70 | 84.34% | #174 | 85 | 63 | 74.12% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% | #317 | 16 | 1 | 6.25% |
| #79 | 69 | 44 | 63.77% | #175 | 54 | 40 | 74.07% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% | #318 | 59 | 48 | 81.36% |
| #80 | 64 | 54 | 84.38% | #176 | 13 | 13 | 100.00% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% | #319 | 53 | 48 | 90.57% |
| #82 | 22 | 1 | 4.55% | #177 | 18 | 17 | 94.44% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% | #320 | 87 | 65 | 74.71% |
| #83 | 16 | 6 | 37.50% | #179 | 72 | 62 | 86.11% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% | #323 | 23 | 14 | 60.87% |
| #84 | 24 | 21 | 87.50% | #180 | 61 | 61 | 100.00% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% | #32 | 8 | 2 | 25.00% |
| #85 | 24 | 23 | 95.83% | #183 | 53 | 46 | 86.79% | #311 | 42 | 30 | 71.43% | #311 | 223 | 192 | 86.10% |
| #86 | 20 | 18 | 90.00% | #184 | 73 | 53 | 72.60% | | | | | | | | |

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<https://www.facebook.com/sdamericanlegion>

From the NEC



Denny Brenden
National Executive Committeeman

This is the first article I'm writing as your National Executive Committeeman. I would like to thank all the Posts that supported me at the State Convention. The South Dakota American Legion is very lucky. We have many leaders in the Department who are willing and able to step up in leadership positions. This past Convention two qualified candidates ran for both Alternate NEC and NEC positions. This coming year two candidates have already announced their candidacy for State Commander. Elections make for great conventions and gives a choice to all the Posts on who they prefer to serve.

At the Fall District Meetings, I spoke on National

Commander Triola's priority and program for the upcoming year. His priority is to reduce veteran suicide. Every 24 hours 22 veterans commit suicide. He asked all Posts use the Buddy Check program and reach out to veterans they may have not seen for quite a while and ask how everything is going and if they may need any assistance. Many legionnaires are home bound, lonely and could use the comradeship. The National Commander says "Be the One" to save a life and prevent a suicide.

National Commander Triola's program for the year is the Veterans and Children Foundation. The endowment fund was converted into this foundation. The purpose of the Foundation is to support 3,000 American Legion Service Officers with certification and training on a yearly basis. Our Department Service Officer goes for training to Indianapolis and Washington DC and expenses are paid for out of this foundation. The American Legion Service Officers secured an estimated \$14.25 billion in disability compensation and other benefits in 2020 alone.

Also, the Veterans and Children Foundation

funds the Temporary Financial Assistance program. This program grants up to \$3,000 for families in crisis to help with food, shelter, utilities and other expenses to help stabilize their home. The National organization pays out between \$500,000 and a million dollars each year to help children of military personnel and qualified veterans. During the Federal government shutdown, members of the Coast Guard went over a month without paychecks. The American Legion stepped in, delivering over \$1 million to more than 1700 junior officers who had children at home. In order to build this fund up, the Department was asked approximately three years ago to donate 25 cents a year per member for 6 years. This would mean \$1.50 for each member. Posts are asked to donate \$1 per member to the Veterans and Children Foundation. Donations can be sent to State Headquarters or National Headquarters with a note saying to donate to the Veterans and Children Foundation.

I would like to thank each of you for all

Department Calendar

January 2023

- 1-2 New Year's Holiday, HQ closed
 TBD District Oratory Contests
 16 Martin Luther King Holiday, HQ closed
 19 Mid-Winter Membership Target date - 80%
 20 MidWinter Go-Getter certification to HQ

February 2023

- 10-12 MidWinter Conference in Huron
 12 Department Oratory Contest
 15 President's Day Membership Target date - 85%
 20 President's Day Holiday, HQ closed
 26-28 Washington Conference

March 2023

- 1 Washington Conference ends
 TBD Legionnaire of the Year packages to District Commanders
 11 District 5 Spring Meeting
 12 District 4 Spring Meeting
 15 Legion Birthday Membership Target date - 90%
 18 District 3 Spring Meeting
 19 District 6 Spring Meeting
 25 District 1 Spring Meeting
 26 District 2 Spring Meeting

April 2023

- 1 District 8 Spring Meeting
 2 District 7 Spring Meeting
 7 Good Friday HQ closed
 TBD Youth Trooper Academy process starts with Highway Patrol
 10 Post Data Reports completed and submitted to HQ
 13 Dept Convention Go-Getters certification due to HQ
 19 Children and Youth Membership Target date - 95%
 TBD Post Officer elections

May 2023

- 1 Good Samaritan of the Year packages due to HQ from District Commanders
 1 Educator of the Year packages due to HQ from District Commanders
 1 Convention Committee members submitted to HQ from District Commanders
 1 Posts submit Americanism Reports to HQ
 8-11 National Spring meetings
 17 Armed Forces Day Membership Target Date - 100%
 29 Boys State starts
 29 Memorial Day, HQ closed
 TBD Post submit Officer Certifications as soon as officers are installed

June 2023

- 1 SDALPA Newspaper nominations due to HQ
 1 Consolidated Post Reports due to HQ
 4 Post submit Dept Convention Delegate and Alternat Credentials to HQ
 8-11 Department Convention in Oacoma
 9 History Award nominations due at registration desk at Dept Convention
 19 Juneteenth Holiday, HQ closed
 26-30 Youth Trooper Academy

July 2023

- TBD Finance Commission and Dept Executive Committee meet for annual budget
 4 Independence Day, HQ closed
 27 National Membership Workshop

August 2023

- 25-31 National Conention, Charlotte NC

MyLegion Training



This presentation will provide information available to post and squadron adjutants and commanders. MyLegion is a secure website members can log in to see their membership details. Members of MyLegion are offered discounts on auto rentals, finances and insurance, medical, entertainment, relocation, retail, travel, post discounts and more.

Through MyLegion, there is an area called My Groups which will be the focus of this training. My Groups is the administrative side of MyLegion. Topics to be covered include: member lookup and management, reports and labels, membership processing, global member search and access to group attributes and contact information. To get the most out of the class, we highly recommend you bring a laptop computer and already be registered with an account on MyLegion. Please contact Kevin Morello at KMore29442@aol.com if you need help registering.

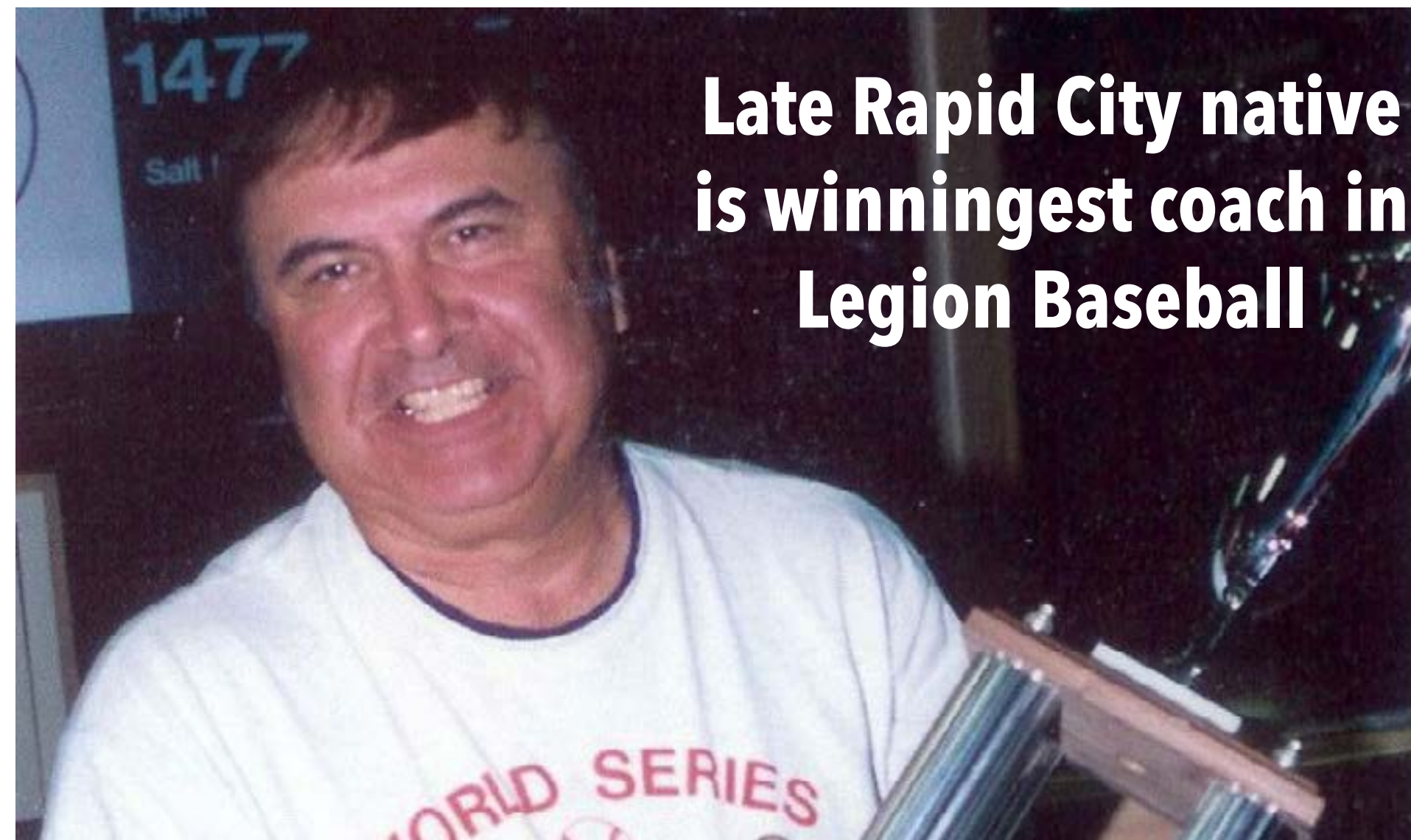
SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION SCHOLARSHIP

Children and grandchildren of veterans are eligible to apply along with veterans. Scholarships will be paid to the Recipient and the post-secondary school that they attend after the completion of the 1st semester.



Applications due February 15, 2023

<https://www.sdlegion.org/scholarship-information/>



Late Rapid City native is winningest coach in Legion Baseball

Richard Walker
American Legion

The winningest American Legion Baseball coach in history?

It's the late Dave Ploof of Rapid City, S.D., who guided the Post 22 Hardhats to 2,483 victories, 34 state titles, eight regional championships and one American Legion World Series title.

The 1993 ALWS title team included George W. Rulon American Legion Player of the Year in pitcher-first baseman Ben Thomas and the third of Ploof's three eventual major leaguers in shortstop Mark Ellis.

Ploof's program was so iconic that South Dakota PBS once did a documentary called "Dynasty on the Diamond" on the Post 22 program. The documentary premiered in October 2017, less than five months after Ploof died at 80 on May 28, 2017.

Post 22 teams now have 41 state championships, which ranks them among the winningest programs in American Legion Baseball history.

Ploof's first team in 1965 finished 28-20 overall following a fourth-place finish in the Central Plains regional in Salina, Kan.

He won 10 state titles in his first 13 seasons before Rapid City made the first of its eight ALWS appearances (all under Ploof's direction) in 1977. In his fourth ALWS appearance, the Hardhats brought home the first and only title in South Dakota history in 1993 with an impressive 70-5 overall record.

Rapid City's next-best finish was third in the 2002 season when Post 22 finished with an 85-14 record that was one victory shy of the all-time single-season win total in American Legion baseball history; Woodward, Okla., went 86-12 in 1985.

When Ploof died, his successor, Mitch Messer, summed up Ploof's impact best in a story that appeared in The Rapid City Journal on May 29, 2017.

"We're talking about a man who transformed baseball in this town and transformed hundreds of lives," Messer told the newspaper. "There is only one Dave Ploof. We should all be celebrating his life and his time here in Rapid City, and not only what he did for our city, but for Post 22 baseball." Dave Collins (1968-71), Kelvin Torve

(1976-78) and Ellis (1993-95) all led Rapid City to state titles, with Torve guiding Post 22 to the 1977 ALWS and Ellis to the ALWS in 1993 and 1995.

Collins spent 16 years in the major leagues with eight teams, Torve three years with two teams and Ellis 12 years with four teams. Torve returned to Post 22 and replaced Messer as its head coach beginning in 2018.

The 1993 team played its best when it most needed to with a 25-game winning streak that didn't end until the next-to-last day of the ALWS in Roseburg, Ore.

Thomas, who later pitched at Wichita State and spent one year in professional baseball, went 3-0 in national competition to finish with a 12-0 seasonal pitching record. Other top pitchers were Joel Fenske (13-0 record), Bill Freytag (9-0), John Gerlach (7-1) and Jeff Gossman (7-2).

Thomas and Ryan Merritt, who hit .490 in national competition, had two hits apiece in a 7-4 championship game victory where Freytag scattered 13 hits in a complete game victory; Freytag would later spend two years in professional baseball.

The championship game victory came one day after Norman, Okla., handed Rapid City a 11-5 defeat for Post 22's only loss in the last month of the season.

For the year, Nate Barnes (.463 average), Merritt (.445), Thomas (.428), Brian Ogle (.401), Ellis (.358), Kent Holland (.342) and Scott Dressler (.314) led a powerful Rapid City offense.

Ellis, 16 at the time, would go on to be selected South Dakota American Legion Player of the Year in 1994 and 1995. He also played at the University of Florida before embarking on his professional baseball career.

(Right) Dave Ploof was Rapid City Post 22's coach for 47 years. Ploof was inducted into the South Dakota Sports Hall of Fame in 2006.

Photos from: SD Sports Hall of Fame



ORATORY CONTEST COMPLETION DATES

The Americanism Commission has set the following completion dates for the oratory contests:

- Post contests completed by January 8, 2023
- District contests completed by January 22nd, 2023
- Department contest on February 12th, 2023 at Mid-Winter conference.

The following dates and locations have been set for the District contests:

DIST. 1 – to be held at Sturgis American Legion Post 33, January 8, 2023, 1:00pm. Storm date, Jan. 15, same time and place.

DIST. 2 – to be held at SDSM&T Classroom Bldg., 501 E. Saint Joseph St, January 8, 2023, 10:00 a.m. Storm date, January 15th, same time and place.

DIST. 3 – to be held at Faith Lutheran Church Christian Living Center, 714 N Grand Ave, Pierre, SD, January 15, 2023 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 22nd, same time and place.

DIST. 4 – to be held at the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 431 W Melgaard Rd, Aberdeen, SD 57401 Janu- ary 8 2023, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 15th, same time and place.

DIST. 5 – to be held at American Lutheran Church,

Castlewood, SD on Jan. 22, 2023, 1:00 p.m. NOTE CHANGES

DIST. 6 – to be held at the Best Western Hotel 2000 Dakota Ave S, Huron, SD, January 15, 2023, 2:00p.m. Storm date, Jan22th, same time and place.

DIST. 7 – to be held at the Humboldt Community Center, January 15, 2023, 2:00 p.m. Storm date January 22nd, same time and place.

DIST. 8 – to be held at Al Neuharth Media Center, 555 N Dakota St, Vermillion, January 15th, 2023, 2:00 p.m. Storm Date January 22nd, same time and place.

What Do These Men



Have in Common?

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Information and applications can be found at

www.southdakotaboysstate.com

www.sdlegion.org/program/boys-state

or contact your local American Legion Post.



The South Dakota State American Legion Golf Tournament was hosted by the Hartford American Legion Post #118 and Humboldt American Legion Post #62 on Sept. 10th and 11th at the Central Valley Golf Course in Hartford SD. Ten teams participated with 40 players from around the state. An evening meal was provided after Saturday's play at the golf course. Pin prizes were announced at the social. Some of the earnings from this year's tournament will be directed to South Dakota Honor Flight and the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. The winning team members were: Jerry Price, Carry Loudenslager and Aaron Schultz, Hartford; and Darwin Viet, Sioux Falls. The second-place team was: Jim Logue, Tom Larson, Wayne Beatty and John Peterson from Wakonda. The annual South Dakota American Legion Golf Tournament is held every year after Labor Day. Next year's tournament site will be determined in January.

American Legion Around the State



Vilas Kurtenbach, Joe Puetz and Jim Polreis purchase food for the Ethan Post holiday donations. Around Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Post purchases groceries for 6 needy families in the community. Most of the money for these grocery boxes is from a generous donation from one of our members. The Sons of the American Legion Chapter contributes, and the Parkston Food Center treats us generously also. Each family receives approximately \$180 worth of food items.



Left: On October 18, Courtney Steffen, Vice Commander of Districts 3-8, attended the American Legion Sioux Falls SD Post 15 Stag Supper. They discussed the PACT Act and the multitude of benefits it encompasses for Veterans and their families of many eras.

Below: The Parker-Browder American Legion Post 4 of Mobridge color guard prepares to lead a parade. Pictured left to right, Leo Rookey, Post Champlain and Walworth County Service Officer, Noah Feyerisen and Isaac Aman members of 200th Engineering Company of SDANG and Gordon Hintz, Commander Post 4.



On December 11, Department Commander Doug Feltman, District 7 Commander, District 7 Auxiliary President and American Legion Auxiliary President attended the Fredrick C. Schroeder Post #97 in Egan Christmas party and supper. The event was very well attended and all enjoyed a delicious turkey supper with all the trimmings.

States First Annual Department of South Dakota American Legion College



The American Legion Department of South Dakota established the Department of South Dakota American Legion College at the 103rd Annual State Convention in June 2022. The American Legion National Headquarters urged Departments to form a Legion College. South Dakota is one of many states that has created a Department College.

This does not replace and should not discourage applications to the American Legion National College. The Department of South Dakota American Legion College was created to provide training, within the state of South Dakota, for members and leaders that serve at the Post, District, and Department level.

On April 22, 2023, the first annual South Dakota American Legion College will be held online through Zoom. The following four classes are required by the National American Legion to establish a Department Legion College and will be the only classes offered this year.

April 22, 2023, Classes:

- Mentorship – Past National Commander Rehbein
- Running a Meeting – Department Finance Officer Krisma DeWitt
- Resolution Writing – Department Adjutant Kevin Hempel
- Train-the-Trainer – Department Vice Commander Doug Harris

Additional classes will be added in the future to meet the needs of South Dakota American Legion Posts, Districts, and the Department.

Twenty participants will be selected to attend this year. Applicants must meet the following prerequisites: minimum of three years of continuous membership, must have completed the American Legion Basic Training Course, must have endorsement of Post Commander or Adjutant, and must have access to a computer and the internet.

Applications are due to Department Headquarters by March 15th. Applications will be available at the Mid-Winter conference and at the SDlegion website by following this link: <https://www.sdlegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Dept-Legion-College-Application.pdf> The application can also be found on the SDlegion website under training, and department training tools.

Application packets need to be sent to:
South Dakota American Legion
Attn: SDALC Selection Committee
PO Box 67
Watertown, SD 57201



South Dakota Taps

As reported to Department Headquarters, March 10 2022- May 3, 2022

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

Benjamin Disraeli

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---------------------|------|------------------|----------------------|------|------------------|-------------------|
| #1 | Sioux Falls | Kenneth Beringer | #24 | Circle Pines | Ronald Leighty | #140 | Salem | Earl Junker |
| #1 | Yankton | Cloyd Conroy | #25 | Madison | Dennis Kearin | #141 | Sisseton | Ramon Jones |
| #2 | Tyndall | George Jaeger | #25 | Madison | Carsten Bergheim | #143 | Midland | John Odea |
| #2 | Tyndall | Michael Elsberry | #27 | Kadoka | C Uhler | #143 | Colorado Springs | James Illian |
| #2 | Babb | Gus Menninger | #29 | Woonsocket | John Davis | #143 | Midland | George Stroppel |
| #3 | Pukwana | Merle Ketelhut | #29 | Woonsocket | James Sandness | #145 | Howard | Jerry Hodges |
| #3 | Chamberlain | Thomas Stone | #29 | Brandon | Wayne Steichen | #148 | Aberdeen | Floyd Smith |
| #4 | Sioux Falls | Richard Gross | #31 | Hot Springs | Melvin Carlson | #152 | Freeman | Myron Mehlhaf |
| #4 | Mobridge | Doug Orth | #31 | Fort Meade | Frank Kucera | #154 | Marion | Charles Kerkhove |
| #5 | Plankinton | Edwin Krell | #33 | Rapid City | Leo Getsgo | #154 | Montrose | Roger Kipp |
| #7 | Sioux Falls | Robert Peskey | #33 | Sturgis | David Peterson | #154 | Monroe | Roger Morrison |
| #7 | Huron | Timothy Caulfield | #33 | Sturgis | Walt Wiedmann | #159 | Hoven | Roy Thorne |
| #7 | Rapid City | Camden Galliger | #38 | Sioux Falls | Dale Brueggeman | #164 | Lead | John Kain |
| #7 | Sioux Falls | Boyd Heckel | #38 | Canton | Delbert Jury | #164 | Spearfish | Robert Furrow |
| #7 | Huron | Harold Owens | #38 | Rapid City | Brice Clegg | #167 | Carter | Stanley Maier |
| #7 | Elkton | Robert Rathbun | #38 | Miller | Gene Norton | #170 | Spearfish | Alvin Winckler |
| #7 | Henry | Clifford Schieckoff | #40 | Webster | Leroy Weber | #172 | Rapid City | David Gehman |
| #7 | Huron | Emil Thompson | #40 | Webster | Jack Chastain | #173 | Philip | Gary Nixon |
| #7 | Devils Lake | Edwin Goeser | #40 | Webster | Larry Wagner | #179 | Kennebec | Donald Floyd |
| #7 | Lincoln | James Hyland | #40 | Bristol | Robert Raap | #180 | Claire City | Roger Hofland |
| #7 | Huron | Thomas Coville | #40 | Webster | Russell Shoemaker | #180 | Hot Springs | Dennis Leclair |
| #8 | Pierre | Rodney Frazier | #41 | Lakeview | Richard Bettmeng | #184 | Watertown | Carl Bevers |
| #8 | Pierre | Robert Huckins | #41 | Mitchell | James Loomer | #184 | Watertown | Gordon Kruse |
| #8 | Florence | Hal Westover | #43 | Centerville | Darrell Fischer | #184 | Estelline | Mike Simon |
| #8 | Northridge | Richard Schoessler | #43 | Centerville | Boyd Ostrem | #184 | Volga | Randy Sween |
| #8 | Pierre | Dale Hartmann | #44 | Vermillion | Roger Kugler | #186 | Bismarck | Otto Nehlich |
| #11 | Wagner | John Harmon | #46 | Custer | Keith Blume | #186 | Eureka | Walter Opp |
| #11 | Wagner | Francis Cuka | #47 | Artesian | Warren Peer | #186 | Eureka | Robert Jones |
| #11 | Lesterville | Bruce Dvoracek | #48 | Fort Bragg | Francis Robertson | #187 | Fairfax | Ronald Kulm |
| #12 | Yankton | William Heubaum | #50 | Sisseton | Wayne Johnson | #189 | Aberdeen | Raymond Mohr |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Joseph Smook | #50 | Wahpeton | Wayne Ellingson | #189 | Oakes | Kermit Ulmer |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Wesley Nelson | #50 | Sisseton | James Forrette | #189 | Warner | Paul Vetch |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Orville Hill | #58 | Bath | Dennis Beckler | #194 | Parkston | Russel Kurtenbach |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | David Visker | #60 | Clark | Mark Ceisel | #200 | Brookings | George Perry |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | John Kittelson | #60 | Clark | Robert Forest | #206 | Colton | Garret Reurink |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Raymond Barrett | #60 | Lake Norden | Ernest Peterson | #206 | Colton | James Mitchell |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Ronald Beaner | #61 | Canova | Lloyd Koepsell | #229 | Rogers | Gerald Carlson |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Keith Walker | #62 | Tacoma | Leonard Meyer | #229 | Big Stone Cty | Aaron Smith |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Maurice Bills | #63 | Brookings | Gordon Mydland | #233 | Belle Fourche | Austin Post |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Michael Fargen | #65 | Colton | John Schwebach | #237 | Yankton | Mel Larson |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Paul Swain | #65 | Brandon | Roger Hanson | #240 | Rapid City | Maynard Barker |
| #15 | Sioux Falls | Bern Schliesman | #65 | Cary | Robert Fiegen | #259 | Roscoe | Earl Hettick |
| #17 | Andover | Verlyn Nordseth | #66 | Lemmon | John Deland | #261 | Oakdale | Eugene Klumb |
| #17 | Watertown | Richard Vohlken | #66 | Whispering Pines | David Jensen | #264 | Bowdle | Dale Oster |
| #17 | Watertown | Dwayne Blocker | #70 | Sioux Falls | Herbert Wolterstorff | #266 | Tea | Delmer Wetering |
| #17 | Dawson | Dwight Roesch | #71 | Phoenix | Lawrence Weiss | #268 | Huron | Gunner Bastrup |
| #17 | Watertown | Virgil Plunkett | #74 | Brookings | Harry Jones | #273 | Frederick | Thomas Dosch |
| #18 | Sioux Falls | Elmer Herrmann | #74 | Brookings | William Mielke | #273 | Frederick | Robert Pence |
| #18 | Rapid City | Kermit Black | #80 | Fargo | Dwite Krizan | #274 | Clear Lake | Robert Eggers |
| #20 | Pierre | Robert Calkins | #80 | Sioux Falls | Raymond Janisch | #278 | Brookings | Robert Foster |
| #20 | Pierre | Gerald Sylva | #92 | Sioux Falls | Wesley Lunstrum | #279 | Lemmon | Edward Schmidt |
| #21 | Viborg | Jon Parsons | #93 | Letcher | Mark Stevens | #282 | Pickstown | Eugene Payer |
| #21 | Hurley | Robert Deneui | #93 | Mitchell | Marvin Northrup | #292 | Brookings | Carroll Schultz |
| #21 | Spearfish | Donald Balsley | #93 | White Lake | Norman Thompson | #298 | Hurley | Lester Jahng |
| #22 | Rapid City | Richard Lindenmeyer | #97 | Flandreau | Elmer Hinricher | #303 | New Underwood | Curtis Halverson |
| #22 | Black Hawk | Delvin Pearson | #110 | St Lawrence | Donald Moriarty | #303 | Buckeye | Thomas Lowther |
| #22 | Rapid City | Marvin Galinat | #115 | Platte | Ronald Audiss | #303 | Rapid City | Richard Trankle |
| #22 | Rapid City | Alan Schroeder | #120 | Eagle Butte | Robert Rose | #311 | Sprague | James Hedlund |
| #23 | Garretson | Donald Pierret | #120 | Diamondville | Lyle Beebe | #311 | Rapid City | Leonard McVay |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Donald Whittlinger | #121 | Federal Way | Wilmer Schmidt | #311 | Williamsport | Donald Sealock |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Thomas Perrizo | #131 | Sioux Falls | Robert Klingbile | #314 | Rosholt | Clyde Williams |
| #24 | Sioux Falls | Charles Miller | #131 | Sioux Falls | Kenneth Kuhnert | #314 | Agency Village | Justin Chanku |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Harold Hoffman | #134 | Elk Point | Gerald Zeller | #315 | Rapid City | Walter Joynet |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Sam Olson | #134 | Jefferson | Ray Lafleur | #320 | Rapid City | Timothy Giago |
| #24 | Aberdeen | E Swanson | #137 | San Diego | Lyola Jensen | #500 | Spearfish | George Wilken |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Ronald Angerhofer | #137 | Warner | Charles Seaman | #500 | Tea | Andrew Erickson |
| #24 | Longmont | Gary Brown | #137 | Warner | Laurence Meehan | #500 | Tea | Roger Klinghagen |
| #24 | Brandon | Clair Hicks | #137 | Aberdeen | Warren Criddle | | | |
| #24 | Aberdeen | Terry Kumpf | #140 | West Fargo | Wayne Lubinus | | | |

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