

Up To Now!

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Issued Monthly from State Headquarters at Watertown, S.D. 57201-0067

Phone (605) 886-3604

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July 12 Finance Commission Budget Meeting, Dept HQ, 9am

July 13 DEC Meeting, Post 17, Watertown, 1pm

July 13-14 Dist Commander's & Vice's Training, Dept HQ

Jul 15 Tee it up for the Troops Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser,

Arrowhead Country Club, Rapid City 7:15 am

July 17 SD Vets Council Meeting, VFW Aberdeen 11am

July 21 TAL Basic Training, Redfield Post 92, 1pm

July 21-27 Boys Nation, Washington DC

July 25-28 National Membership Workshop, Indianapolis, IN

Jul 27 2nd Annual Korean War/Defense Veterans Appreciation Brookings Outdoor Adventure Center 12:00 noon

July 27 Department Auxiliary President AnnaMae Warnier Homecoming, Morningside Event Center, Alcester, SD

Aug 10 Beers and Ears, Battle Creek Post 303, Hermosa 4-6pm

Aug 13 National Commander Visit to Black Hills

Aug 17 Commander's Homecoming, 12pm Noon, Piedmont Elementary School "Old Auditorium"

Aug 21 SD Vets Council Meeting, VFW Post 791, Yankton

Aug 29 Veterans Day at the SD State Fair, Huron

Aug 29-Sep 2 SD State Fair, Huron

Aug 23-29 National Convention, New Orleans, LA

Sep 2 Labor Day HQ Closed, Display Flag

Sep 7-8 SDAL Golf Tournament, Webster

Sep 14 Dist 2 Fall Meeting

Sep 15 Dist 1 Fall Meeting

Sep 17 Constitution Day, Display Flag

Sep 18 SD Vets Council Meeting Post 22 Rapid City

Sep 21-22 & 27-29 National Americanism Conference

Sep 25 Midwest Honor Flight Mission 21 Welcome Home Ceremo-

ny Sioux Falls Convention Center 9:30pm

Sep 28 Dist 6 Fall Meeting

Sep 29 Dist 3 Fall Meeting

Oct 7-10 National Fall Meetings, Indianapolis, IN

Oct 8 Midwest Honor Flight Mission 22 Welcome Home Ceremony

Sioux Falls Convention Center 9:30pm

Oct 14 Native American Day, HQ Closed, Display Flag

Oct 15 Midwest Honor Flight Mission 23 Welcome Home Ceremo-

ny Sioux Falls Convention Center 9:30pm

Oct 16 SD Vets Council Meeting, Brookings Post 74 11am

Oct 19 Dist 4 Fall Meeting, Redfield 1pm

Oct 20 Dist 5 Fall Meeting, White

Oct 26 Dist 7 Fall Meeting, 11am Social, 12pm Meal, 1pm Meeting,

Dell Rapids

Oct 27 Dist 8 Fall Meeting

Nov 5 Election Day

Nov 9 We've Got Your Six, Sturgis 11am-2pm

Nov 11 Veterans Day **HQ Closed**, Display Flag

Nov 20 SD Vets Council Meeting, Sioux Falls, DAV, 1519 W. 51 St

Nov 20 Legislative Round Table, Sioux Falls, DAV, 11am Nov 21

Legislative Round Table, Watertown, 11am

Nov 22 Legislative Round Table, Rapid City Post 22, 11am

Nov 23 Legislative Round Table, Pierre Post 8, 11am

Nov 28 Thanksgiving HQ Closed, Display Flag

Dec 3—Governor's Budget Address—1:00 pm

Dec 24-25 Christmas Holiday HQ Closed

Jan 14 Legislative Session starts

Jan 15 SD Veterans Council Meeting, Pierre

Feb 14-16 Mid-Winter Conference

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Greetings as your newly elected Department Commander for 2024 – 2025. What an exciting year it will be!!! I just wanted to mention a few items for those who were not able to make the Convention in Pierre last month. First, I want to do a shout out to Pierre Post 8 for putting on an awesome Convention. For those that don't know me, my name is Kevin Morello and I'm from Post 311 in Piedmont. My homecoming is scheduled for August 17th, details are in this month's Up-to-Now. It will be a great time, come enjoy the Black Hills while you're here.



My motto for the year is going to be "Legion Family Uniting Communities." We must work together as a family

(Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders) to open our post to the local community through family-oriented events. You'll find that after repeated activities, some attendees will start asking about The American Legion and find out they're qualified to join our family. By coming to us versus going to them; they are more likely to sign up. The key is to get them into our posts and have that face-to-face conversation. Many of us are already doing this without realizing it; we just need to place more focus, emphasis and purpose to it. Also, it doesn't happen overnight; with time, persistence and patience, you'll start to see results.

I wanted to let everyone know that my project this year will be a donation for camping scholarships to the South Dakota Scouting Organization. They do so much to support our communities and our Legion Family; let's show them our appreciation.

Let me know if you want me to visit your post and/or event. The calendar is still open but starting to fill up.

Min J M



COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING

Piedmont Valley Post #311 American Legion Family invites All Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons Of The Legion, Legion Riders, Veterans, Retirees, Friends, Relatives, Community & State Citizens to The American Legion Department of South Dakota, Department Commander Kevin Morello's Homecoming Celebration, Saturday, Aug 17, 2024, doors open at 12pm at Piedmont, Elementary School "Old Auditorium," 16159 2nd Street, Piedmont. Formal Ceremony 1:00pm, 1:45pm parade to Piedmont Valley Post #311 101 Pine Stret, Piedmont, 2:15 activities & BBQ for more information contact David Booze, 605-484-5328, Boozedmaverick6@aol.com or Trip McClurkin 605-787-1664, post311viceadjutant@gmail.com.

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT HOMECOMING

The new Department Auxiliary President, AnnaMae Warnier will hold her homecoming July 27th at the Morningside Event Center, Alcester, SD. Social from 2-3pm, program at 3:00pm.

LEGION INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion states, "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment." Additionally the National Charter, approved by Congress, stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is never to help or endorse a candidate. As a private citizen and not speaking for the organization, can do whatever is legal and ethical to advance his/her candidacy. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with The American Legion emblem visible, must be removed so as not to imply any endorsement by The American Legion. This includes in person or over social media.

The American Legion values its independence and effectiveness on veterans' issues. This stance is best maintained by neutrality on all individual candidates or political parties. The American Legion, by legal definition, is non-partisan and supports "or opposes as necessary" only issues which impact the Four Pillars.

DEPARTMENT ELECTIONS AT CONVENTION

Congratulations to the Department Officers who were elected at this years convention:

Commander– Kevin Morello of Piedmont Post 311 Vice Commander Dist 1&2– Brain Dean of Spearfish Post 164 Vice Commander Dist 3-8– Kevin Hempel of Chester Post 136 National Executive Committee– Fred Nelson of Spearfish Post 164 Alt National Executive Committee– Doug Feltman of Chamberlain Post 3

Dept Sgt At Arms- Greg Geiman of Scotland Post 155 Endorsement for Hugh, "Homer" Holmes for National Vice Cmdr

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MAKES APPOINTMENTS

Commander Steffen has made the following appointments:

Bill Peters of Sioux Falls to one year term as Membership Chairman

Dale Hill of Sioux Falls to five year term as member of the Finance Commission

2023-2024 SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES

Individual Winners: Robert Atyeo Post 49, Richard Reid Post 74 Post Winners: 16 Gann Valley, 193 Irene, 307 Renner & 303 Hermosa

SWEEPSTAKES DRAWING AT CONVENTION

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

\$1000 Kristen Timmermans of Corsica \$500 Kevin Josephsen of Garretson \$300 Don Borgen of Veblen

\$200 Veryl Altman of Sioux Falls

\$100 Hank Sunne

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

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Cards have been mailed!!!

Headquarters has received the 2025 membership cards. Certify your officers <u>NOW</u> to receive your cards. The form is in the Post Adjutant's Administrative and Awards Manual or you can email the information to hq@sdlegion.org or give Judy a call at Dept HQ.

1	VERMILLION	2	TYNDALL	7	HURON
10	LAKE ANDES	13	WAKONDA NGS		
14	WESSINGTON S	SPRI	NGS	19	WOOD
26	STICKNEY	29	WOONSOCKET	35	HIGHMORE
36	BONESTEEL	38	MILLER	39	GROTON
41	ALEXANDRIA	43	CENTERVILLE	56	GEDDES
59	WOLSEY	61	CANOVA	64	WILMOT
70	FLANDREAU	77	BLUNT HITCHCOCK	82	BULLHEAD
83	TIMBER LAKE	84	HITCHCOCK	86	ALCESTER
97	EGAN	99	PIERPONT	103	ASTORIA
105	NUNDA	111	PIERPONT BRIDGEWATER	R113	WILLOW LAKE
117	VIBORG	120	ISABEL	124	DUPREE
125	ROSEBUD	128	HUDSON	132	SPRINGFIELD
133	SINAI	134	ELK POINT	136	CHESTER
137	WARNER	144	ISABEL HUDSON ELK POINT BELVIDERE	145	HOWARD
153	CARPENTER	158	OLDHAM WITTEN		
161	WENTWORTH	167	WITTEN	173	PHILIP
174	LENNOX	175	BALTIC PARKSTON	186	EUREKA
189	HOSMER	194	PARKSTON	198	ELKTON
201	PUKWANA	209	RAYMOND	210	MT VERNON
216	RAMONA	233	RAYMOND NEWELL, NISLA OELRICHS ERWIN	AND), VALE
235	MARION	238	OELRICHS	239	LITTLE EAGLE
240	MARTIN	241	ERWIN	248	FREEMAN
251	PINE RIDGE	256	NEW UNDERW	OOL)
258	ANDOVER	265	KYLE	266	TEA
268	VIRGIL	269	WANBLEE	282	PICKSTOWN
289	MANSFIELD	294	PORCUPINE	295	PARMELEE
299	POLO	301	DRAPER	302	MANDERSON
308	EAGLE BUTTE	310	WANBLEE PORCUPINE DRAPER NORRIS	317	ALLEN
324	ROCK CREEK				

RESOLUTIONS FROM CONVENTION

The following are the titles and first resolved clause of the resolutions that have been submitted for consideration at convention. Those with constitutional intent are enclosed in the print mailing all are available in full form on the Dept website.

24-01 CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA DUES- Constitution & By-laws ARTICLE VI DUES, Section 2. DUES – DISPOSITION. to read "Each Post shall pay annually to the headquarters of the Department of South Dakota the sum of \$20.00 plus the amount of National dues assessed each fiscal year for each of its individual members, which said sum shall be distributed as follows:"- PASSED

24-02 RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A STANDING FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE— TABLED

24-03 SUPPORT OF PROVIDING POSTSECONDARY CREDIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE- That the American Legion supports the establishment of a standardized system to recognize and appropriately award academic credit or certification for military service based on American Council on Education recommendations of evaluation of the Joint Services Transcript System standards PASSED

<u>24-04 SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL MEMBER AT</u> <u>LARGE-</u> That the member at large appointed by the Commander serve on the SDVC for a term of three years **PASSED** 24-05 BIRCH-MILLER POST 9 OF MILBANK, SD TO HOST THE STATE A, THE STATE B AND THE JUNIOR LEGION BASEBALL

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

24-06 SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTI-TUTION REGARDING PROPERTY RIGHTS-the American Legion supports the rights of property owners FAILED

24-07 IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLNESS CARE FOR VET-ERANS "An Ounce Of Prevention Is Worth A Pound Of Cure" call upon the Department of Veterans Affairs to prioritize and enhance health and wellness care for veterans by including gym memberships as a covered benefit under VA healthcare service PASSED

<u>24-08 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN APPOINTED TO THE FINANCE</u> <u>COMMISSION</u>—Membership Chair appointed a voting member of the Finance Commission. **FAILED**

FOUNDATION UPDATE

This year the annual fun auction during the State Convention was a great success raising \$9,528. Additionally at the Convention the Foundation received \$8,253 from this year's Ride 605. Altogether over the Convention weekend the foundation received in \$17,781 in donations, it was a great weekend. The mission is not complete. The goal is \$1 million and we are far from it with less than \$400,000. Donate today and help up reach our goal of \$1 million to fund all of our Legion Programs. Make checks out to the South Dakota American Legion Foundation and mail to DEPT HQ.

THE AMERICAN LEGION RIDE 605 WAS A SUCCESS!!

We sincerely thank our South Dakota American Legion Riders and the entire American Legion Family for their unwavering dedication. The 2024 Ride 605 was a tremendous display of unity, successfully raising \$7,643 for the South Dakota American Legion Foundation. Contributions included \$5,490 from the ride itself, a generous anonymous donation of \$1,010 that brought the total to \$6,500, and a further \$1,143 collected at the Department Convention. All funds raised will directly benefit Veterans and Youth. Fred Nelson, Dept. Riders Liaison

FUTURE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AND MIDWINTER DATES AND LOCATIONS

2025 MidWinter, Arrowwood Resort, Oacoma, Feb 14-16

2025 Convention, Crossroads Hotel, Huron, June 19-22

2026 MidWinter, Arrowwood Resort, Oacoma, Feb 20-22

2026 Convention, Aberdeen, June 18-21

BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS SCHEDULE

The schedule for The American Legion 2024 baseball state tournaments is as follows:

State "A" Senior-July 30-Aug 3, Brookings

State "A" Junior- Aug 1-4, Pierre

State "B" Senior - Aug 2-6, Salem

State "B" Junior- Aug 9-1, Groton

BATTLE CREEK POST 303 ANNUAL BEERS AND EARS

Saturday August 10, 2024, 4-6pm at Hermosa Post home 14386 Hwy 40, \$10 adults \$5:00 kids. Contact Rick McDonald for more information rickymac1955@gmail.com or 605-484-7136.

LEGION TABLE AT STATE FAIR

The SD Legion will have a booth at the State Fair in the <u>Air Conditioned</u> the Expo Building August 28 to September 2, from 9 am to 5 pm. PDC Gary Wolkow is the point of contact. If you are interested in helping, please contact Gary at 605-203-0226.

2024 SDAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The SDAL annual golf tournament will be held in Webster, SD over the weekend of September 7th and 8th, 2024. Register today by calling Chad Hesla at 605-881-0007. For more information contact Athletic Commissioner Elton Blemaster 605-280-2023 or Athletic Commissioner Gene Gillen at 605-415-0885

2024 NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE

Applications are now being accepted at Department Headquarters for this year's *National American Legion College* which will be held in Indianapolis November 17-22, 2024. Applications can be found on the National website, https://www.legion.org/college and are due to Department Headquarters by July 1st. DO NOT send them to National as they must have the Department's approval first.

LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST (LIT)

This Year the Department received \$38,311 for the LIT Program.

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

As a member of the Legion Family, you're eligible for No Cost LegionCare Insurance. \$5,000 NO COST To You Accidental Death Protection if traveling on official American Legion business.

\$1,000 Accidental Death Protection for all other covered accidents. Activate your NO COST To You insurance coverage today. https://www.thelit.com/no-cost-legioncare/

You may also qualify for Medicare Supplement and Medicare Advantage Plans through LIT with a portion of your dollars spent coming right back here to the Department.https://www.thelit.com/

2025 MID-WINTER INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Mid-Winter Conference is being hosted by Potter Post 3, and will be held at the Arrowwood Resort, in Oacoma, 14-16 February 2025. A block of rooms has been set aside, reservations can be made by calling the resort at 605-234-6376. The rate for the Standard King or Double Queen room is \$104 plus taxes. Be sure to mention you will be attending the American Legion Mid-winter Conference. Other details such as the Joint Banquet, Go-Getters, and training sessions will be coming soon.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BACK TO SCHOOL BACKPACK GIVEAWAY

Volunteer assistance is needed with the Back to School Backpack Giveaway event being held at the Dakotas Building on Ellsworth AFB, Saturday, July 27th, 9:00am-12pm. If you are available to assist in handing out backpacks to children of local service members, your help would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to volunteer, contact District 1 Commander Marv Tisdall 605-481-9104 or myself at the number below. If you do not have access to Ellsworth AFB, please provide Marv or I with your name and drivers license number by July 19th so that we can coordinator to have your background check information ran by Base security. On the day of the event, please use the base main gate. If you or your Post/Unit/Squadron or Riders group has any donations they wish to hand out during the event, please contact me for the more information. Please let Marv or I know if you have any questions about attending this event.

Kind Regards,

Harry Boner, Children and Youth Chairman The American Legion, Department of South Dakota 605-691-4571 hb.boner@gmail.com

MESSAGE FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Legion Family, times like these I think of the parable known as "Stone Soup", the meaning being that we all pitch in to help anyone in the village with what we can contribute. The South Dakota American Legion Education Scholarship is one of the few programs that can directly give financial assistance for Educational purposes to our own or our progeny. I humbly ask that each Legion Post, each Auxiliary Unit, each SAL Squadron and each Legion Rider Club

consider to dedicate at least one fund raiser event (at the local level) to add to the principal of the Scholarship Fund. From these contributions we can hopefully increase the Scholarship Amounts to higher levels and attract more attention not just to the Scholarship but all the other opportunities the American Legion can offer. If you do conduct a fundraiser for this noble cause please make funds payable to SDAL Education Scholarship Fund and send to DEPT HQ.

All for one and one for all.

Yours in Service,

Mike Pauling, Education Committee Chairman The American Legion, Department of South Dakota michaelpauling@ymail.com

NEW VETERANS DISCOUNT ON HOTELS!!!

Ramkota Companies now offers a 20% discounted rate for ALL Veterans at 10 locations in South Dakota. Use the links below to book on line or you can call the hotel and ask for the Veteran's discount.

Aberdeen - Best Western Hotel and Conference Center

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.42041.html?promoCode=VETERAN&singleRate=true

Chamberlain/Oacoma - Cedar Shore Resort

https://be.synxis.com/?hotel=62000&promo=VETRNS

Deadwood - The Lodge at Deadwood Resort

https://be.synxis.com/?hotel=61991&promo=VET

Pierre - Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center

https://be.synxis.com/?Hotel=67230&promo=VETS

Pierre - ClubHouse Hotel & Suites

https://be.synxis.com/?hotel=61910&rate=VET

Rapid City - Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.42048.html?promoCode=VETERAN

Sioux Falls - Best Western Plus Ramkota Hotel

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-details.42038.html?rateCode=8K

Sioux Falls- ClubHouse Hotel & Suites

https://be.synxis.com/?Hotel=61911&promo=VETS

Sioux Falls - AeroStay Hotel

https://be.synxis.com/?hotel=64817&promo=MILT

Watertown - Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center https://be.synxis.com/?hotel=75667&rate=VETERANS

SD DEPT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS RESOURCE BOOK

The South Dakota Department of Veteran Affairs (SDDVA) has developed a resource book to educate veterans on the benefits and resources that are available to them and their family. This is a great guide with 60 pages of useful information. You can access the guide at the SDDVA website https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/

Or directly at: https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/publicaffairs/Other%20Publi

LEGION HISTORY

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

July 10-13, 1938: The 20th Annual Convention of the American Legion Department of South Dakota is held in Aberdeen. Turner Rudesill of Rapid City Post 22 is elected Department Commander. July 9, 1954: The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is formed. Today, more than \$11 million has been awarded to youth organizations and projects designed to help America's children. July 21, 1983: The Legion announces its sponsorship of an independent study on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans. Congress receives the results of the "American Legion-Columbia University Study of Vietnam-era Veterans" in 1989.

July 2016: The Legacy Scholarship is expanded to children of post-

9/11 veterans who have a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or greater.

July 30, 2019: President Trump signs the Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service – the LEGION Act – which extends recognized wartime service to cover previously unrecognized periods of U.S. military conflict, back to World War II. More than 1,600 Americans were killed or wounded in armed hostilities during periods not previously recognized as wartime. The act allows veterans who served outside of the previously designated war eras to join The American Legion.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

June 30th has passed, and we are now embarking on the New Year. I want to first extend my congratulations to Kevin for assuming the role of State Commander and express my anticipation for a fantastic year ahead.

I also want to commend all who renewed or joined in 2024. Although we fell short of our desired numbers, your support of the American Legion is greatly appreciated.

The objectives for 2024-2025 have been established. This marks the commencement of a three-year plan which, I believe, in conjunction with this year's leadership, is attainable. Each *post's goal is to match the membership count from June 21, 2024.* I chose this target to inject vitality into our posts in the upcoming year.

The three-year membership option remains open for this year. The National dues have increased by \$5 this year, and State dues will rise by \$5 next year. Renewals must be made at the current rate, not last year's. However, you can save money by renewing or joining for three years.

I urge everyone to renew now. Early renewal saves the Legion money by reducing the need for sending out notices.

As I often said last year and will emphasize again, it's about teamwork. Being part of a team means each of us knows someone we could invite to join the American Legion or who has yet to pay their dues. Usually, it's simply a matter of asking.

Let's make this year another 'Eye of the Tiger' year. With everyone's contribution, it can and will be a success. As your membership chairman once more, let's go get them.

I need assistance with a couple of things. The State will have a booth at DakotaFest in Mitchell from August 20-23, with the show running daily from 9 AM to 4 PM. Your help is needed to staff the booth during these times. I'm asking everyone to volunteer at some point throughout these days. Another opportunity is the South Dakota State Fair in Huron from August 28 to September 2. This year, we'll be located in the air-conditioned expo building on the fairgrounds. Once more, your assistance is crucial for booth staffing. To volunteer, please reach out to me at 605.360.6547 or contact Post 15 at 605.336.3470.

Thank you in advance for your support with these events. It's all about teamwork.

Thank you,

God bless you and your family.

Bill

