



Up To Now!

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

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August 2, 2024

- Aug 10 Beers and Ears, Battle Creek Post 303, Hermosa 4-6pm
- Aug 13 National Commander Visit to Black Hills
- Aug 14 Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Veterans Stand Down, Grand River Resort, Mobridge 10am (CT)
- Aug 16 National Airborne Day
- Aug 17 Commander Morello's Homecoming (see details below)
- Aug 21 SD Vets Council Meeting, VFW Post 791, Yankton
- Aug 29 Veterans Day at the SD State Fair, Huron
- Aug 28-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 Ceremony 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 Ceremony 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 11am Social, 12pm Meeting
- Oct 26 Dist 7 Fall Meeting, Dell Rapids 11am Social, 12pm Meal, 1pm Meeting,
- 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 28-29 Thanksgiving **HQ Closed**, Display Flag
- Dec 3 Governor's Budget Address 1pm
- Dec 14 Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, Sioux Falls 11am
- Dec 24-25 Christmas Holiday **HQ Closed**
- Dec 31-Jan 2 New Year's Holiday **HQ Closed**
- Jan 14 Legislative Session starts
- Jan 15 SD Veterans Council Meeting, Pierre
- Jan 20 Martin Luther King Jr Holiday **HQ Closed**
- Feb 14-16 Mid-Winter Conference

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Greetings from your Department Commander for 2024 – 2025. July was the first full month and boy was it packed. Started off with a Fourth of July parade at my home post in Piedmont. The planning team did a fantastic job! Then onto business meetings in Watertown to include Finance, Department Executive Committee, and District Commander Training. The Training Committee conducted a Legion Basic Training course in Redfield – very successful. The month ended with the Legion Membership Workshop in Indianapolis. The membership team did an outstanding job negotiating a more realistic goal – way to go!!!!



Additionally, State Legion Baseball tournaments started at the end of July and went through beginning of August – looking forward to catching a few games. Shortly after Legion Baseball, the current National Commander will be paying us a visit for one day in the Black Hills. If you're interested in seeing him, contact the Department Adjutant. Almost immediately after that, my homecoming will be on August 17th. Would love to see you there. Finally at the end of August will be the National Convention in New Orleans.

I ask each post to continue expanding on your Legion family and engaging with the local community.

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

--Kevin Morello, Department Commander
"Legion Family Uniting Communities"

COMMANDER MORELLO'S HOMECOMING

Piedmont Valley Post #311 American Legion Family invites All to Department Commander Kevin Morello's Homecoming Celebration, Sat Aug 17th. Doors open at 12pm at Piedmont, Elementary School "Old Auditorium," Ceremony 1pm, 1:45pm parade to Post #311, 2:15pm activities & BBQ for more info contact David Booze, 605-484-5328, Boozedmaverick6@aol.com or Trip McClurkin 605-787-1664, post311viceadjutant@gmail.com.



105TH NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION CONVENTION DELEGATES AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES

The following are the Department's Delegates and Alternates to the National Convention in New Orleans, LA, August 23-29:

Department Commander Kevin Morello of Piedmont
Department Vice Commander Brian Dean of Spearfish
Department Adjutant C.P. Van Delist of Rapid City
NEC Denny Brenden of Watertown (National Call In)
ANEC Fred Nelson of Spearfish (National Call In)
PDC Paul Evenson of Garretson (National Call In)
PDC Terry Hanson of Arlington (National Call In)
PDC Hugh Holmes of Mitchell (National Call In)
PDC Tim Jurgens of Milbank (National Call In)
PDC Jim Huls of Madison (National Call In)
PDC Doug Feltman of Chamberlain (National Call In)
Travise Flisrand of Badger (National Call In)
Warren Aas of Watertown (National Call In)
Doug Harris of Rapid City (National Call In)
Noel Cummins of Milbank
Steve Stier of Onida
Vern Prickett of Stratford
Andy Lyngen of Garretson
Chris Rendon of Rapid City
Courtney Steffen of Chester

Alternate Delegates:

Department Vice Commander Kevin Hempel of Chester
PDC Rick McDonald of Hermosa
PDC Charemon Dunham of Iroquois
Annette Dunham of Iroquois
Patrick Branco of Sioux Falls
John Bachmeier of Sioux Falls
Bill Peters of Sioux Falls
Rod Smith of Chester
Dale Hill of Sioux Falls
Bruce Babcock of Groton
Ward Chapman of Milbank
Kate Schmidt of Wessington Springs
Derek Besler of Whitwood
Jeff Hrabanek of Winner

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MAKES APPOINTMENTS

- Commander Morello has made the following appointments:
- Bill Peters of Sioux Falls to one year term as Membership Chair
- Dave Booze of Piedmont to one year term as Americanism Chair
- Mike Kumm of North Sioux City to one year term as Department Chaplain
- Harry Boner of Castlewood to one year term as Department Children and Youth Chairman
- Dale Hill of Sioux Falls to five year term as member of the Finance Commission
- Ryan Skjoldal to one year term as Homeless Veteran Chairman
- Fred Lee to one year term as Department Historian
- Courtney Steffen to one year term as Marketing & Media Communications Chair
- Trip McClurkin to one year term as National Security Chair
- Courtney Steffen, Paul Evenson, & Gary Wolkow each to a five year term as on the SDAL Foundation.
- C.P. Van Delist to one year term as Department Public Relations Officer

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.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Cards have been mailed!!!

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

Post that have not Certified their officers.

1	VERMILLION	10 LAKE ANDES	26 STICKNEY
35	HIGHMORE	36 BONESTEEL	38 MILLER
39	GROTON	41 ALEXANDRIA	59 WOLSEY
61	CANOVA	70 FLANDREAU	77 BLUNT
82	BULLHEAD	83 TIMBER LAKE	86 ALCESTER
99	PIERPONT	103 ASTORIA	105 NUNDA
111	BRIDGEWATER	120 ISABEL	124 DUPREE
125	ROSEBUD	128 HUDSON	132 SPRINGFIELD
134	ELK POINT	136 CHESTER	137 WARNER
153	CARPENTER	158 OLDHAM	167 WITTEN
175	BALTIC	189 HOSMER	198 ELKTON
201	PUKWANA	209 RAYMOND	235 MARION
233	NEWELL, NISLAND, VALE		238 OELRICHS
239	LITTLE EAGLE	251 PINE RIDGE	324 ROCK CREEK
256	NEW UNDERWOOD	265 KYLE	317 ALLEN
268	VIRGIL	269 WANBLEE	282 PICKSTOWN
294	PORCUPINE	295 PARMELEE	299 POLO
301	DRAPER	302 MANDERSON	308 EAGLE BUTTE
310	NORRIS		

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.

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 as-

essed 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**

24-04 SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL MEMBER AT LARGE- 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 TOURNAMENTS- 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 CONSTITUTION REGARDING PROPERTY RIGHTS-the American Legion supports the rights of property owners **FAILED**

24-07 IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLNESS CARE FOR VETERANS "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**

24-08 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN APPOINTED TO THE FINANCE COMMISSION- 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 us 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.

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 **Air Conditioned** 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

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 CONFERENCE

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.

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%20Publications/2023%20Resource%20Book%20\(July\).pdf](https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/publicaffairs/Other%20Publications/2023%20Resource%20Book%20(July).pdf)

LEGION HISTORY

Aug 24-26, 1920, The Second Annual Convention of the American Legion Department of South Dakota took place in Watertown. After L.L. Stephens of Pierre withdrew from the race, Fred B. Ray of Yankton was elected Department Commander. Ray lied about his age to join the Army in 1898 at the age of 15 where he served time in the Philippines. In WWI he served as the Regimental Commander of both the 135th Infantry and the 133rd Infantry. Ray is one of two Commanders to serve as Department Commander for two years.

Aug 10-13, 1941, The Twenty-third Annual Convention of the American Legion Department of South Dakota took place in Huron. Department Commander Mumford presided and Claude Hamilton of Sioux Falls is elected Department Commander. The Boys State report given by Dr. Harry Darling 274 boys attend the second session that year. Phil Boerger was elected as Boys State Governor and with in two years he was drafted into WWII. Boerger would go on to graduate from West Point and later retire from the US Army at the rank of Brigadier General.

Aug 24, 1969, The Legion's National Executive Committee establishes the National Emergency Fund as a result of the effects of Hurricane Camille.

Aug 2, 1990, The Legion files suit against the federal government for failure to conduct a Congress-mandated study about the effects of Agent Orange on veterans who served in Vietnam.

Aug 16, 2017: The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 – also known as the “Forever GI Bill” because it removes time limits for veterans who wish to use it for college – is signed into law by President Donald J. Trump. The legislation is named for The American Legion past national commander who in the winter of 1943-44 drafted the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act that changed the nation after World War II.

2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues for the 2025 Membership year is \$38.50 for each membership sent to Headquarters. Enclosed is a membership dues breakdown.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

The American Legion, a cornerstone of veteran affairs, has always been a beacon of hope and camaraderie for those who have served their country. As summer fades into the rearview, the Legion's members gear up for a year of purposeful engagement and community service. The membership workshop in Indianapolis, a melting pot of ideas and strategies, set the stage for a year of growth and achievement. The initial target, daunting as it seemed, was met with a strategic counter-proposal that not only aligned with the three-year plan but also set a realistic and achievable goal. The collective effort to sustain membership numbers is a testament to the organization's resilience and commitment to its cause.

The target of 15,513 with a stretch number of 15,600 though modest, is a step forward, reflecting the Legion's dynamic approach to growth. The enthusiasm for the upcoming year is palpable, and the early achievement of reaching 6,400 members in the first month is a promising start. This momentum, if maintained, will undoubtedly lead to meeting the Mid-Winter objective, showcasing the Legion's ability to rally its troops and march towards a common goal.

The call to action for each member to recruit one new member is a powerful strategy that harnesses the individual networks and influence of the Legion's vast membership. The 'Eye of the Tiger' spirit, a metaphor for determination and vigor, is apt for this mission. It's a reminder of the impact that a simple invitation can have, potentially changing the course of an individual's life by introducing them to the camaraderie and support of the American Legion.

Membership renewal is another critical aspect of sustaining the Legion's force. It's a reaffirmation of commitment, a renewal of vows to the principles that bind the members together. The gratitude expressed for the dedication of the members is a reflection of the Legion's appreciation for the sacrifices made by its veterans. It's a bond forged in service, strengthened by shared experiences, and celebrated through the Legion's continued success and influence.

In essence, the American Legion stands as a pillar of veteran support, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. The goals set forth for the year are not just numbers to be achieved but milestones that signify the Legion's ongoing mission to serve and uplift its members. The collective drive, the individual contributions, and the unwavering spirit of the 'Eye of the Tiger' will undoubtedly make this year a memorable one in the Legion's storied history. The dedication to veterans is the Legion's enduring legacy, one that will continue to inspire and guide future generations of servicemen and women. Thank you, members, for carrying this torch of honor and service with unwavering dedication. Let's move forward together, with the same resolve that has defined the American Legion for over a century.

Thank you,
God bless you and your family.

Bill

