



Up To Now!

Dennis Brenden – Department Adjutant
www.sdlegion.org – Email: sdlegion@dailypost.com



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OFFICIAL CALL ENCLOSED

Enclosed for all recipients is the Official Call for the South Dakota American Legion 2010 Spring District Conventions.

Enclosed for Post Adjutants is a brochure from Department Children and Youth Vice Chairman Wolfgang Migge on Special Olympics. This Special Olympics program has been supported by the American Legion Department of South Dakota for several years and Posts are encouraged to make donations to Special Olympics at your Spring District Convention or through State Headquarters.

HATS IN THE RING

Piedmont Valley Post 311 has endorsed Duane Riedlinger of Black Hawk (member of the Piedmont Post) for the office of State Vice Commander for the Area consisting of Districts 10, 11, 12 of the American Legion.

George A. Fitzgerald Post 65 has endorsed William P. Huntimer for the office of Department Master-At-Arms for the Department of South Dakota.

MIDWINTER IS DECLARED SUCCESS

Members of The American Legion Family converged upon Cedar Shore Resort in Oacoma, February 13-15 for the 39th Annual MidWinter Conference.

State Commander Rod Martens has declared the conference a success. The dedicated members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion came out in sufficient numbers to ensure the success of another MidWinter Conference.

The Department wishes to express its gratitude to Potter American Legion Post 3 of Chamberlain for hosting the event and extends a special Thank You to Post 3 Commander Kenneth Anderson and Unit 3 President Gloria Anderson.

HUMBOLDT YOUTH TAKES ORATORY CHAMPIONSHIP

Joe Schartz of Humboldt emerged victorious as the top orator in the final round of competition of the South Dakota American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program "A Constitutional Speech Contest" in Chamberlain this past weekend. Joe is the son of Franklin and Ann Marie Schartz of Humboldt.

Contestants were required to deliver a prepared oration of 8-10 minutes on the U. S. Constitution as their first oration. In turn, a constitutional topic was assigned to the contestants and a 3-5 minute extemporaneous oration was required on that topic. They were allowed five minutes of preparation time.

Each of the four contestants in the finals had previously won competition at the local, district and area levels of competition. Those eligible to compete at the finals this past weekend consisted of Schartz, a sophomore at West Central High School, sponsored by Hartford Post 118 and Humboldt Post 62; Haley Hardie, a junior at Watertown High School, sponsored by the Codington County Post 17; Elizabeth Gunn, a junior at Lemmon High School, sponsored by Lemmon Post 66; and Carrie Jean Hemeyer, a senior at Gregory High School, sponsored by Gregory Post 6. Each contestant won a \$100 scholarship for winning their respective area competition.

Schartz was awarded a championship trophy, a \$1,000 scholar-

ship, and a plaque to be displayed in his high school's trophy case as the first place winner of the state contest. He now has the opportunity to represent The South Dakota American Legion in the National Contest which will be held April 16-18, 2010, at the Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis Conference Center and Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. Schartz will receive an additional \$1,500 scholarship for participating in the first round of competition at national and an additional \$1,500 if he advances to the second round of national competition but does not make it into the final round. Scholarship awards possible in the national level competition are \$18,000 for first place, \$16,000 for second place, and \$14,000 for third place.

Second place in the state finals contest was awarded to Haley Hardie of Watertown. Third place was awarded to Carrie Jean Hemeyer and Elizabeth Gunn received the fourth place award. Second place received a \$500 scholarship; third place received a \$300 scholarship and fourth place a \$100 scholarship.

2010 SPRING DISTRICT CONVENTION SCHEDULE

March 12 – Dist 8 – Winner: 6:00 Social, 6:30 Banquet, 7:30 Meeting at Legion Post Home, Auxiliary – Post Home

March 13 – Dist 7 – Corsica: 11:00 AM Social, 12:00 noon Banquet, 1:00 PM Meeting at Corsica Post Home, Auxiliary – Corsica Community Center

March 19 – Dist 9 – Kadoka: 5:00 PM Social Club 27, 6:00 PM Banquet Club 27, 7:00 PM Meeting Club 27, Auxiliary – Gateway Apartments

March 20 – Dist 13 – Wall: 1:30 PM Meeting at Wall Community Center, Lunch following Meeting, Auxiliary – Wall Community Center

March 21 – Dist 12 – Spearfish: 1:30 PM Social at Spearfish Holiday Inn, 2:00 PM Meeting at Room 76 at Spearfish Holiday Inn, 5:00 PM Dinner Lucky 13 Restaurant (individuals will be responsible for paying their own costs), Auxiliary – Canyon Room at Spearfish Holiday Inn

March 26 – Dist 11 – Lemmon: 5:00 PM Social at Legion Post Home, 6:00 PM Banquet, 7:00 PM Meeting Lemmon Fire Hall, Auxiliary – Legion Post Home

March 27 – Dist 10 – Pierre: 2:00 PM Meeting at Pierre Post Home, 5:00 PM Social, 6:00 PM Banquet, Auxiliary – VFW 2038 Membership Room

April 9 – District 14 – TBA

April 10 – Dist 5 – TBA

April 11 – Dist 6 – Mitchell: 5:00 PM - Social at Mitchell Post Home, 6:00 PM - Banquet, 7:00 PM Meeting, Auxiliary – Mitchell Post Home

April 16 – Dist 4 – New Effington: 4:00 Executive Meeting, 5:00 PM - Social Hour at Community Center, 6:00 PM – Banquet, 7:00 PM – Meetings: Legion – Community Center, Auxiliary – Community Center

April 17 – Dist 3 – Gary: 6:00 PM Social at Legion Post Home, 7:00 PM Banquet, 8:00 PM Meeting, Auxiliary - Post Home

April 18 – Dist 2 – Brookings: 12:00 PM Social, 12:30 PM Meal, 1:30 PM Meeting at Legion Post Home, Auxiliary - VFW

April 25 – Dist 1 – Tea: 2:00 Meeting Legion Post Home, 5:00 PM

CONTINUED ON BACK

Social, 6:00 PM Banquet, Auxiliary – Tea Area Historical Society

2010 EAGLE SCOUT OF THE YEAR

The American Legion annually honors The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year at its National Convention. The winner of the competition receives a \$10,000 scholarship and the three runners-up are each awarded a \$2,500 scholarship.

Forms for nominating Boys Scouts for The American Legion 2010 Eagle Scout of the Year award are now available from State Headquarters.

State Headquarters must receive nominations no later than March 1, 2010. A panel will then select the Department Eagle Scout of the Year.

TEN TO TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ten members of The American Legion Department of South Dakota will travel to Washington, D.C., in late February, early March, to participate in the Fiftieth Annual Washington Conference. This annual conference is the primary opportunity for members of The American Legion, from all 50 states to converge on Capitol Hill, all carrying the same message regarding the Legislative Priorities which The American Legion has compiled that will serve the best interests of our nation's veterans, along with the priorities we believe best serve those interests represented by the other three pillars of The American Legion; Americanism, Children and Youth, and National Security.

Those called into Washington, D.C. this year include NEC Paul Evenson of Garretson (Foreign Relations Commission Liaison), PDC Gerald Goetzinger of Martin (Vice Chairman Membership and Post Activities Committee), PDC Larry Price of Redfield (Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee), Alt NEC Phil Anderson of Piedmont (National Security Commission), PDC Jim Huls of Salem (Employment Committee), PDC Gunner Baatrup of Huron (Convention Commission) and PDC William Dolan of Beresford (Public Relations Commission). Also attending will be Department Commander Rod Martens of Black Hawk and Adjutant Denny Brenden of Watertown.

The Washington Conference is scheduled for February 28 - March 3. Attendees will be staying at the Renaissance Washington, DC Hotel. February 28th, March 1st and 3rd will be meeting days for the various committees and commissions. Tuesday, March 2 has been designated as Hill Day. Tuesday, March 2 will commence with an American Legion Legislative Rally at the hotel in the morning and shortly after lunch, all participants will journey to Capitol Hill to present The American Legion's Legislative Priorities list to their respective Congressional Delegations.

The tenth South Dakota Legionnaire traveling to Washington, DC will be Department Service Officer Warren Aas of Watertown. DSO Aas will be participating in the Annual Department Service Officer's School which is also held at the Renaissance Washington DC Hotel. DSO Aas will be arriving in Washington on February 23 and will be departing on February 28, just shortly after the remaining Legionnaires from South Dakota arrive.

FROM PIERRE

HB 1049 – This bill would require the Director of the Division of Veterans Affairs to have all honorable discharges from all periods of service in the Armed Forces of the United States. *The bill passed the House and Senate unanimously. The bill was signed by the governor. Your American Legion Legislative Lobbyists testified in support of this bill at both the House and Senate Committee hearings.*

HB 1005 – This bill was introduced at the request of the Interim Bureau of Personnel Agency Review Committee. Under Section 8, 3-3-1 be amended to include a veteran defined in 33-17-1, who is a

citizen and resident of the state, shall receive preference for appointment, employment, and promotion. A veteran who has a service connected disability shall be given a preference over a non-disabled veteran. *The House Judiciary Committee passed unanimously and received a Do Pass recommendation. The bill also received a unanimous vote in the House, with a recommendation of Do Pass. It was heard in the Senate State Affairs Committee and received a unanimous vote with a Do Pass recommendation. It is scheduled to be voted on in the Senate Feb 15.*

HB 1130 - This bill would include the spouses of certain members of the armed forces who died in military service as eligible for gold star special license plates. *This bill received a unanimous vote in the House Transportation Committee with a recommendation of Do Pass. The bill received a Do Pass recommendation on the floor of the House with a unanimous vote. It is currently assigned to the Senate Transportation Committee.*

HB 1185 – This bill would provide property tax benefits to the surviving spouses of certain disabled veterans. *This bill was heard Feb. 2 in the House Taxation Committee. It passed unanimously with a Do Pass recommendation. On Feb 9, this bill received a unanimous vote in the house with a recommendation to Do Pass. This bill is now assigned to the Senate Taxation Committee. Your American Legion lobbyists testified in favor of this bill.*

HB 1048 – This bill would revise certain provisions relating to a previous appropriation for National Guard armory construction. *This bill received a unanimous vote in the House Appropriations Committee with a recommendation of Do Pass. The bill received a Do Pass on the floor of the House with a 67-1 vote. It has been assigned to the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

SB 69 - This bill is to authorize certain exceptions to the nursing facility moratorium. This bill would allow a new 50 bed nursing home to be constructed, operated, and maintained in the eastern part of the State. *This bill was heard in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and amended. The amended version passed committee unanimously and was recommended to Do Pass. This bill will be heard in the Senate State Affairs Committee on Feb 17.*

SB 76 – This bill would revise the composition of the State Veterans' Commission. *This bill was heard in the Senate State Affairs Committee. This bill was amended to ensure that the Governor will retain the authority to appoint a Commissioner from two nominees from the Veterans Service Organizations. It passed unanimously with a recommendation of Do Pass. This bill passed the Senate floor on Feb 16 with a vote of 33-1. The American Legion Lobbyists testified on this bill.*

SB 134 – This bill would provide for divestiture of state investment funds in certain companies liable to sanctions under the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996. *It pertains to monies invested by the State Investment Council in companies with business operations in Iran. Iran is on a list of countries at the United States Department of State that have been determined to repeatedly provide support for acts of international terrorism. The American Legion is monitoring this bill.*

SB 150 - This bill would provide for an interim study of the potential creation of a Department of Veterans Affairs as a cabinet-level position. This bill was heard in the Senate State Affairs Committee on Feb. 10. The bill was defeated by a 6-3 vote and was deferred to the 41st legislative day effectively killing the bill. *The American Legion Lobbyists testified in favor of this bill.*

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

2010 membership stands at 21,786 or 88.88% of the 2010 membership goal.

