



# Up To Now!

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## ENCLOSED FOR ALL COMMANDERS

Enclosed to all Post Commanders is the 2009-2010 Consolidated Post Report. This report may appear complicated and something you don't want to be troubled with, but is perhaps the most important document your Post can complete and submit. The information is compiled from all the Posts and is put into the annual report sent to the United States Congress. Please take a few minutes and fill out all information pertaining to your Post's activities and submit it to State Headquarters as soon as possible.

Also to Post Commanders is a letter outlining the 2010 American Legion Baseball Registration procedures.

Also enclosed is a letter from the Department Historian Dale Strom along with an entry form for one year Post Narrative and one year Post Yearbook for the annual history book contest at the State Convention.

Enclosed to all Post Commanders is the 2010 Dakota Dream Post Application Form.

## 2010 SPRING DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

District 8 Spring Meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. The District 8 Meeting regularly scheduled for March 12 has been rescheduled for Thursday, March 18, at the same sight and times.

On Saturday, March 13, sixty-two Legionnaires plus American Legion Auxiliary members came to Corsica for the first Spring District Meeting.

This week, Spring District Conventions will be held in accordance with the following schedule: Thursday, March 18 in Winner; Friday, March 19, District 9 in Kadoka; Saturday, March 20, District 13 in Wall; and Sunday, March 21, District 12 in Spearfish.

The schedule for subsequent Spring District Conventions is listed below:

- March 26, District 11 in Lemmon
- March 27, District 10 in Pierre
- April 9, District 14 in Aberdeen
- April 10, District 5 in Redfield
- April 11, District 6 in Mitchell
- April 16, District 4 in New Effington
- April 17, District 3 in Gary
- April 18, District 2 in Brookings
- April 25, District 1 in Tea

## DISTRICT LEGIONNAIRES OF THE YEAR SELECTED

During the 2010 Spring District Convention, Department Commander Martens is recognizing all Post Legionnaires of the Year and the District Executive Committee in each District is selecting one of the Post Legionnaires as the District Legionnaire of the Year for their respective Districts.

Congratulations to the following Legionnaire who was selected as District Legionnaire of the Year during the recently completed 2010 Spring District Convention:

Dist 7 - Arlon D. McNeely of Springfield Post 132

This Legionnaire will be eligible for the competition for The American Legion Department of South Dakota Legionnaire of the Year at the 2010 Department Convention in Spearfish, June 17-20.

## DISTRICT AND COUNTY ELECTIONS

This year at the Spring District Conventions, District Commanders and Vice Commanders are being elected to two-year terms in the even numbered Districts. Additionally, County Commanders are being elected to one-year terms in all Districts unless those leaders have already been named by an established county council.

Elected as County Commanders were the following individuals:

March 13 (District 7 at Corsica) – Leonard Cimpl of Tabor, Bon Homme County; Jay Youngbluth of Wagner, Charles Mix County; Ray Hofman of Vermillion, Clay County; Roy King of Armour, Douglas County; Robert Rennolet of Menno, Hutchinson County; Don List of Yankton, Yankton County.

## MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

A \$250 District Membership Award will go to the District in each of the two goal-size categories that have by The American Legion Birthday Target of March 10, 2010, the highest percentage over 95% of that District's goal. This year we had no winner in category A, but District 12 won with 95.73% in category B. It was a very close contest with District 10 having 95.32%.

Placards will also be awarded to the following Posts for having the highest percentage of membership attainment in each of the five goal-size membership groups. Hecla Post 68 with 169.23% in the 15-74 goal-size group, Hermosa Post 303 with 104.13% in the 75-124 goal-size group, Howard Post 145 with 101.38% in the 125-199 goal-size group, Piedmont Post 311 with 109.39% in the 200-299 goal-size group, Pierre Post #8 with 100.00% in the 300 and larger goal-size group.

Go-Getter Medallions will be awarded to all Posts that reaches or exceeds 95% of it's assigned membership goal by the American Legion Birthday Target Date. The Posts that have achieved this goal are:

**Dist 1** – Humboldt Post 62, Centerville Post 43, Davis Post 176, Marion Post 235, North Sioux City Post 319; **Dist 2** – Elkton Post 198, Badger Post 260, Erwin Post 241, Nunda Post 105, Ramona Post 216, Howard Post 145, Colman Post 278; **Dist 3** – Bradley Post 108, Carpenter Post 153, Clark Post 60, Garden City Post 199, Gary Post 109, Toronto Post 81, Bryant Post 37; **Dist 4** – Grenville Post 267, Roslyn Post 253, Waubay Post 129, Strandburg Post 171, Britton Post 80, Langford Post 141, Rosholt Post 48, Wilmot Post 64; **Dist 5** – Virgil Post 268, Polo Post 299, Ree Heights Post 101, Mansfield Post 289, Northville Post 149; **Dist 6** – Plankinton Post 5, Kimball Post 130, Gann Valley Post 16, Ethan Post 261, Mount Vernon Post 210, Alpena Post 116, Letcher Post 93; **Dist 7** – Geddes Post 56, Greenwood Post 257, Wagner Post 11, Alsen Post 44, Vermillion Post 1, Freeman Post 248, Yankton Post 12; **Dist 8** – Fairfax Post 187, Dallas Post 91, Herrick Post 220, Witten Post 167; **Dist 9** – Midland Post 143, Norris Post 310; **Dist 10** – Blunt Post 77, Pierre Post 8, Lebanon Post 188; **Dist 11** – Eagle Butte Post 308, McIntosh Post 139, Lemmon Post 66; **Dist 12** – Lead Post 31, Piedmont Post 311; **Dist 13** – Hermosa Post 303, Hill City Post 160, Wall Post 246, Kyle Post 265; **Dist 14** – Hecla Post 68, Stratford Post 207, Warner Post 137, Herreid Post 170, Hosmer Post 189, Selby Post 100, Frederick Post 273.

## LEGION/AUXILIARY BOWLING TOURNAMENT

The 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Bowling Tournament will be held in Sisseton at the Lakeland Lanes, on the weekends of April 10-11 and April 17-18, 2010.

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## **HOLMES INSPIRATION OF NEW LEGION COIN**

District 6 Commander Hugh Holmes, a U. S. Army veteran and member of Mitchell American Legion Post 18, is the inspiration for a Blue Star coin to honor spouses of men and women serving in the military.

"I was looking at online merchandise at Emblem Sales and noticed that coins were available that honor military men and women, but there were no coins to honor spouses of military members," Holmes said. "The job description of a military spouse is too hard to put into words. It is the hardest job in the world. They do everything and they do it well."

Holmes e-mailed Emblem Sales representatives, noting his concern about no coin for military spouses. Richard Keith, director of Emblem Sales, liked the idea and ordered production of Blue Star Coins.

Emblem Sales mailed a free coin to Holmes, and he later ordered a number of the newly minted Blue Star coins. He presented his first coin to his daughter-in-law.

"Spouses deserve a big pat on the back for their service to our country, and sometimes we overlook people who do a good job." Holmes said. "I love the design of the coin. It has the colors of our country and the Blue Star Banner."

## **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 was signed by the governor. American Legion Legislative Lobbyists testified in support of this bill at both the House and Senate Committee hearings.*

**HB 1005** – This bill, 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. *This bill was signed by the Governor.*

**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. *The bill was signed by the Governor.*

**HB 1185** – This bill would provide property tax benefits to the surviving spouses of certain disabled veterans. *The Governor signed the bill March 1. 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. *The bill was signed by the Governor.*

**SB 69** 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 passed in the House and Senate and has been sent to the Governor. American Legion lobbyists testified in favor of this bill.*

**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. This bill passed the Senate State Affairs Committee unanimously. This bill passed the Senate floor on Feb 16 with a vote of 33-1. The House State Affairs Committee voted down this bill by a vote of 8-5. Voting against this bill were Turbillville, Steele, Rave, Rausch, Lust, Gosch, Boomgarden, Faehn. Voting for this bill were Lucas, Hunhoff, Feinstein, Engels, and Noem. American Legion Lobbyists testified in favor of 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. *This bill passed in the Senate and House and has been delivered to the Governor. American Legion Lobbyists testified in favor of 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. American Legion Lobbyists testified in favor of this bill.*

## **BOYS STATE REGISTRATION DRAWING NEAR**

All boys planning to attend The American Legion Boys State need to be registered with the Boys State Registrar, Eugene Schumacher of Aberdeen, by April 1. After this date, all Boys are assigned Cities and Dorms for the upcoming session.

A major change this year at Boys State in Aberdeen is a five day Boys State week. This year the American Legion Boys State starts on Monday, May 31 and runs to Friday, June 4. Boys State Corporation felt more boys may want to attend if they didn't have to give up activities on the weekend. Also dining arrangements have been changed to allow the boys more of a variety of food by going to a buffet style of dining.

Also keep in mind that Boys State Orientations should be scheduled after the first of May. It is recommended that the boys have the new 2010 Boys State manuals at the time of their Boys State Orientation.

## **DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA TO RECEIVE \$1,000**

The Department of South Dakota didn't reach the bid submitted by Commander Martens of 93.4% of the 2010 National Membership Goal. The Department came in at 92.2%. Although we didn't reach our goal, National Commander Clarence Hill added a third place award this year, giving \$1,000 to any Department that reaches 90% of goal. This award will be used for computer equipment. Thank you to all who worked hard for membership this year.

## **VETERANS MEMORIAL BOOKS AVAILABLE**

2008-2009 State Commander Jim Huls, during his year, tasked the County Commanders to send in pictures of all the Veterans Memorials in their Counties. Many County Commanders responded and PDC Huls has compiled these pictures with locations into a book.

These books are available from Jim Huls, 104 Best Point Drive, Madison, SD, 57042

## **DAKOTA DREAM POST**

The Dakota Dream Post award was initiated by Past Department Commander Phil Anderson of Piedmont. The award is designed to recognize those American Legion Posts within the Department of South Dakota that are truly taking care of their members and working the programs of The American Legion.

The checklist for eligibility for this award contains 26 items which have been identified as being present in a Dream Post. In order to qualify for this award, your Post must satisfy 20 of the 26 listed items on the criteria listing. Those items that are flagged with a star are required items that must be satisfied. Deadline for qualifying is May 21, 2010. If you have proof of satisfying one of the qualifications that has not been reported on your Post Report, Americanism Report or Consolidated Post Report – please include copy with your application form.

Posts that qualify for the Dakota Dream Post designation will receive a specially designed plaque that can be displayed in their Post Home. The Dakota Dream Post Plaques will be awarded at the Department Convention.

## **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

2010 membership stands at 22,146 or 90.35% of the Department's 2010 Membership Goal.