



Up To Now!



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HATS IN THE RING

Edgar Herrick Post #42 of Arlington has endorsed Dennis Jager of Arlington for the office of State Vice Commander for the Area comprised of Districts 2, 5, and 6.

Pierre Post #8 of Pierre has endorsed Nancy Lemieux of Pierre for the office of State Vice Commander for the Area comprised of Districts 10, 11, and 12.

ENCLOSED FOR ALL RECIPIENTS

Enclosed for all recipients is a **revised** Official Call for South Dakota American Legion 2009 Spring District Conventions.

CORRECTION

In the last *Up To Now* it was reported that Orient Post #178 was to receive a Post honor ribbon for membership achievement. Unfortunately they were not at the Constitutional minimum at the time of the target date. For all membership awards the Constitutional minimum must be achieved the previous year and the current year to be eligible for any membership awards.

2009 SPRING DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

2009 Spring District Conventions commenced March 12th when the first of the 14 District Conventions was held in Philip. By week's end, the conventions had been held in 4 of the Department's 14 Districts. Those District Conventions included District 9 in Philip, District 11 in Faith, District 13 in Hermosa and District 12 in Piedmont.

This week, Spring District Conventions will be held in accordance with the following schedule: Friday, March 20, District 4 in Sisseton; Saturday, March 21, District 14 in Mobridge; and Sunday, March 22, District 10 in Onida.

The schedule for subsequent Spring District Conventions is listed below:

- March 28, District 7 in Wakonda
- March 29, District 8 in Colome
- April 3, District 6 in Kimball
- April 4, District 5 in Cresbard
- April 17, District 2 in Howard
- April 18, District 1 in Garretson
- April 25, District 3 in Watertown

DISTRICT LEGIONNAIRES OF THE YEAR SELECTED

During the 2009 Spring District Convention, Department Commander Huls 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 Legionnaires who were selected as District Legionnaires of the Year during the recently completed 2009 Spring District Conventions:

- Dist 9 – Lester Pearson of Wheeler-Brooks Post 173 in Philip.
- Dist 11 – John Merriman of Brattvet-Green Post 66 in Lemmon.
- Dist 12 – Rod Martens of Piedmont Valley Post 311 in Piedmont.

Dist 13 – Henry “Hank” Holwegner of Battle Creek Post 303 in Hermosa.

Each of these individuals will be eligible for the competition for The American Legion Department of South Dakota Legionnaire of the Year at the 2009 Department Convention in Huron, June 25-28.

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 odd 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.

Phil Pearson of Philip Post 173 and Harold Koenig of Martin Post 240 were elected to two-year terms as District 9 Commander and District 9 Vice Commander, respectively, March 12 during the annual District 9 Convention in Philip.

Willard Ottman of Lemmon Post 66 and Lee Tomac of Thunder Hawk Post 279 were elected to two-year terms as District 11 Commander and District 11 Vice Commander, respectively, March 13 during the annual District 11 Convention in Faith.

Henry Holwegner of Hermosa Post 303 and Ken Orrock of Rapid City Post 22 were elected to two-year terms as District 13 Commander and District 13 Vice Commander, respectively, March 14 during the annual District 13 Convention in Hermosa.

Elected as County Commanders were the following individuals:

March 12 (District 9 at Philip) – Melvin L.J. Young of Allen, Bennett County; Marvin Denke of Philip, Haakon County; and Marvin Starkjohann of White River, Mellette County. Jackson County, Jones County, Todd County and Washabaugh County were not represented at the meeting and we will report the election of that County Commander when information is available.

March 13 (District 11 at Faith) – Donald Tomac of Morrystown (member of the American Legion Post at Thunder Hawk), Corson County; Robert Fisher of Faith, Meade and Ziebach Counties; and Bill Erhart of Lemmon, Perkins County. Dewey County was not represented at the meeting and we will report the election of those County Commanders when information is available.

March 14 (District 13 at Hermosa) – Gene Mikuska of Hermosa, Custer County; R.E. “Chub” Long of Hot Springs, Fall River County; and Dean Pelofske of Rapid City, Pennington County. Shannon County was not represented at the meeting and we will report the election of those County Commanders when information is available.

March 15 (District 12 at Piedmont) – Paul Gremse of Belle Fourche, Butte County; Patrick Lewellen of Spearfish, Lawrence County; and Kenneth Mowrer of Rapid City (member of the American Legion Post at Piedmont), Meade County. Harding County was not represented at the meeting and we will report the election of that County Commander when information is available.

BIDS FOR 2010 BOWLING TOURNAMENT DUE

Bids are now being accepted for Posts and Units wishing to host the 2010 SD American Legion/Auxiliary Department Joint

CONTINUED ON BACK

Bowling Tournament. Tournament players will be allowed to choose from one of three separate weekends to bowl and there will be two sites selected. Each site will have two consecutive weekends open for bowling during the tournament.

The acceptable dates for the tournament have been established as Saturday-Sunday, March 13-14, 2010; Saturday-Sunday, March 20-21, 2010; and Saturday-Sunday, March 27-28, 2010.

Bids should be submitted to SD American Legion State Headquarters, PO Box 67, Watertown, SD 57201 no later than June 1, 2009. The committee will meet shortly after that date to select the bids that will be accepted.

Bid information can be in the form of a letter, stating the following information:

- Post or Unit that will be hosting the event
- Name of Bowling Alley
- City the facility is located in
- Number of lanes available for tournament play
- Dates and times that tournament play will be allowed
- Amenities available in the community (lodging, restaurants, tourist attractions, etc.)

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

A special award is presented to each Post with 5 or more consecutive years at or beyond 90% of goal, by December 31 of each year. Framed citations are awarded for each 5 consecutive years of achievement with attachments awarded for intermediate years. These awards will be presented at the Spring District Meetings.

One Post, Lake Preston Post #63, has made advanced membership assignment every year since the award was implemented 61 years ago. A **SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS** to Lake Preston for this remarkable achievement. Other notable achievements that deserve to be acknowledged are 59 consecutive years by Letcher Post #93, 58 consecutive years by Chancellor Post #283, and 51 consecutive years by Geddes Post #56.

Framed citations will be awarded to the following Posts: Bryant Post #37 – 10 years, Veblen Post #76 – 25 years, Grenville Post #267 – 15 years, Wolsey Post #59 – 25 years, Gayville Post #237 – 5 years, Yankton Post #12 – 5 years, Burke Post #28 – 20 years.

Those Posts receiving attachments for consecutive years of achievement are: Lake Preston Post #63 – 61 years, Letcher Post #93 – 59 years, Chancellor Post #283 – 58 years, Geddes Post #56 – 51 years, Tabor Post #183 – 28 years, Carpenter Post #153 – 24 years, Northville Post #149 – 24 years, Garretson Post 23 – 18 years, Alsen Post #44 – 14 years, Pukwana Post #201 – 13 years, Piedmont Post #311 – 12 years, Witten Post #167 – 11 years, Humboldt Post #62 – 9 years, Erwin Post #241 – 9 years, Howard Post #145 – 9 years, Lead Post #31 – 9 years, Allen Post #317 – 8 years, Platte Post #115 – 6 years, Gregory Post #6 – 6 years, Winner Post #169 – 6 years, Batesland Post #281 – 6 years.

The American Legion Birthday Membership Target Date is used to determine Convention Hall Seating at the Annual Department Convention. Based on membership statistics at State Headquarters on this target date, the best seats in the house for this year's convention will go to District 10 with 98.77% of goal. The remainder of the seating will be in the following order from front to back of the convention hall – District 3, District 1, District 7, District 12, District 4, District 8, District 5, District 6, District 2, District 14, District 13, District 11, and District 9.

Eighty Posts qualified for the Post Go-Getter Medallion award this year. This Medallion recognizes those Posts that attain 95% or more of their membership goal by the Legion Birthday Target Date. Last year ninety-four Posts received this award.

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 date for 2008, the highest percentage over 95% of that District's goal. This year we had no winner in category A, but District 10 won with 98.77 % in category B.

District 8 Commander Tony Opbroek was the single winner in completing the second part of the District award for having 100% Post visitations. Commander Opbroek received a TV Monitor for his efforts.

Parade banners or 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. Herreid Post #170 with 150.00% in the 15-74 goal-size group, Tea Post #266 with 137.04% in the 75-124 goal-size group, Piedmont Post #311 with 110.10% in the 125-199 goal-size group, Yankton Post #12 with 98.65% in the 200-299 goal-size group, Pierre Post #8 with 109.43% in the 300 and larger goal-size group.

FROM PIERRE

South Dakota Legislators are currently on a recess and will return to the Capitol on Monday, March 30 to deal with gubernatorial vetoes. Actions on bills being monitored by The American Legion since the last edition of the *Up To Now* are outlined below:

HB 1025 (Increasing the basic salary recommendation for County Veterans Service Officers) was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee (6-1) on 03/02/09 and passed by the Senate (33-1) on 03/03/09. The bill was signed by the Governor on 03/10/09.

HB 1031 (Increasing the benefit for setting a veterans headstone from \$40 to \$100) was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee (7-0) on 03/02/09 and passed by the Senate (34-0) on 03/03/09. The bill was signed by the Governor on 03/10/09.

HB 1270 (Redirecting the funds in the War Veterans Emergency Loan Fund to other veterans programs – such as funding HB 1025 and HB 1031) was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee (5-1) on 03/02/09 and passed by the Senate (21-13) on 03/03/09. The bill was signed by the Governor on 03/10/09.

SB 151 (Creating a Gold Star License Plate for parents whose children have made the ultimate sacrifice for this country and died during service to the US) passed the House Appropriations Committee (12-0) on 03/05/09 and passed the House (70-0) on 03/09/09. The bill was signed by the Governor on 03/13/09.

DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA WINS \$1,000

The Department of South Dakota won second place in the Big Twelve competition. Commander Huls placed a bid of 92.75% of membership in to National by March 11, 2009. Although the Department was at 93.20%, The Department of Maine had a higher bid, and won first place by achieving their goal. By winning of second place we will receive \$1,000 to be used for computer equipment. Thank you to all who worked hard for membership this year.

AMERICAN LEGION BOWLING TOURNAMENT

The 64th Annual Bowling Tournament will be held in Mitchell at the Village Bowl, on the weekends of March 21-22 and March 28-29, 2009, and in Sisseton at Hippen's Steakhouse & Lanes & Lounge, on March 28-29 and April 4-5, 2009.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

2009 membership stands at 23,104 or 93.66% of the Department's 2009 National membership goal.