



# Up To Now!

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## 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 Legionnaires who were selected as District Legionnaires of the Year during the recently completed 2010 Spring District Convention:

Dist 8 – Ray Petersek of Colome Post 146

Dist 9 – None

Dist 10 – Elton Blemaster of Pierre Post 8

Dist 11 – Rodney Peterson of Lemmon Post 66

Dist 13 – John H. Wheeler of Rapid City Post 22

Dist 12 – Dan Holst of Box Elder Post 315

These Legionnaires 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 District and District Vice Commanders were the following individuals:

**District 8** – District Commander Vic Hoffart of Gregory, member of Dallas Post 91, and District Vice Commander Roger Pochop of Colome

**District 10** – District Commander Royce Loesch of Pierre and District Vice Commander Kenneth Iverson of Gettsyburg

**District 12** – District Commander Fred Nelson of Spearfish and District Vice Commander Ken Mowrer of Rapid City, member of Piedmont Post 311.

Elected as County Commanders were the following individuals:

**March 18 (District 8 at Winner)** – Don Young of Herrick, Gregory County; Jeff Hrabanek of Winner, Tripp County; Wayne Monson of Reliance, Lyman County.

**March 19 (District 9 at Kadoka)** – Melvin Young of Allen, Bennett County; George Stroppel of Midland, Haakon County; Donald “Bud” Perault of Belvidere, Jackson County; Marvin Starkjohann of White River, Mellette County. Jones County, Todd County, and Washabaugh County to be announced.

**March 20 (District 13 at Wall)** – Curt Halverson of Custer, Custer County; R.E. “Chub” Long of Hot Springs, Fall River County; John H. Wheeler of Rapid City, Pennington County. Shannon County to be announced.

**March 21 (District 12 at Spearfish)** – Paul Gremse of Belle Fourche, Butte County; Lewis Penn of Buffalo, Harding County; Dave Bertch of Spearfish, Lawrence County; Jim Carlson of Box Elder, Meade County.

**March 26 (District 11 at Lemmon)** – Donald Tomac of Keldron, Corson County; Bill Erhart of Lemmon, Perkins County; Dewey County, Meade County, and Ziebach County to be announced.

**March 27 (District 10 at Pierre)** – Ollie Redden of Pierre, Hughes County; Ken Brueggman of Highmore, Hyde County; Francis Karst of Hoven, Potter County; Bob Compton of Fort Pierre, Stanley County; and Steve Stier of Onida, Sully County.

## 2010 SPRING DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

Seven of the fourteen Spring District Conventions have been held through the month of March. The District Conventions will continue on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

The schedule for subsequent Spring District Conventions is listed below:

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

## COMFORT WARRIORS RECEIVES \$250K GRANT

The people voted and the troops won. PepsiCo has officially announced that The American Legion’s Operation Comfort Warriors will be awarded a \$250,000 grant from the soft drink giant after finishing first in voting during February’s Refresh Everything Project.

Internet voters were able to choose which of 729 competing charities would receive grants of \$5,000, \$25,000, \$50,000 or \$250,000. The top three finishers in the \$250,000 category are receiving the grants.

“There are so many people to thank, I don’t know where to begin,” said American Legion National Commander Clarence E. Hill. “First, I want to thank Pepsi and its charitable Global Giving Foundation. Then I want to thank The American Legion members, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion members and Legion Riders who supported us by spreading the word and voting. In fact, I want to thank everybody who voted for Operation Comfort Warriors. This was truly a national grassroots effort. Most of all, I want to thank our troops, who go into harm’s way for us every day. It is their sacrifice that makes it possible for us to enjoy the freedoms we all share.”

Since December 2008, the American Legion family has raised funds for Operation Comfort Warriors, a program dedicated to meeting the needs of wounded military personnel, providing them with comfort items not usually supplied by the government. OCW ensures that patients at U.S. military hospitals and warrior transition units are given items like sweat suits, DVDs, puzzles, electronic devices, books, calling cards and more. The American Legion pays all administrative costs for the program, meaning 100 percent of the donations, including the grant money, will go directly to purchasing items for the troops.

Operation Comfort Warriors website is [www.legion.org/ocw](http://www.legion.org/ocw).

## CERTIFICATION OF 2011 POST OFFICERS

Post Adjutants are reminded that they have a responsibility to certify the Post’s 2011 officers to Department Headquarters in Watertown. This certification process is one of the last official duties of the outgoing Post Adjutant. The form for certifying your 2011 Post

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Officers can be found in the 2009-2010 SD American Legion Adjutants' Administrative and Awards Manual. Immediately behind page 12, in that manual there is a white sheet that explains the certification process and the very next page is the green-colored Post Officers Certification Form.

Newly elected Post Officers will not be placed on mailing lists by State or National Headquarters nor will they be recognized as Post Officers by either headquarters until they have been certified. Additionally, Posts will not receive their 2011 membership cards until this certification process is completed.

Complete information requested on the form is required. All blanks must be filled in. We cannot certify officers without their dates of service (enlistment and discharge dates). We must have complete mailing addresses, phone numbers, Legion membership ID#, and would appreciate having the officer's email address if they have one.

### CONSOLIDATED POST REPORTS

Department Commander Rod Martens is urging more Posts to submit the Consolidated Post Reports this year. This report is utilized by National Headquarters to compile the annual report that is provided to congress to report on the activities of The American Legion.

The Consolidated Post Report is one of the most important documents that your Post can complete and submit. The form may appear complicated and look like it takes a lot of time and effort to complete – but if your Post has kept fairly good records during the course of the past year you will find that it is quite easy to compile the information required. Your Post is not expected to have something to report in each and every category or on every other line of the report. We only ask that you report on the information that pertains to your Post.

**REMINDER:** The submission of the CPR is one of the seven mandatory items required to be designated as a Dakota Dream Post. The deadline for submitting Consolidated Post Reports to State Headquarters in Watertown is June 1, 2010.

### NATIONAL ORATORICAL FINALS

The National Oratorical Contest will be conducted April 9-11, 2010, at the Indiana University-Purdue University at the Indianapolis Conference Center & Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. Joe Schartz of Humboldt will represent The American Legion Department of South Dakota in the contest. Joe and his chaperone's expenses will be picked up by The American Legion. Joe will receive \$1,500 in scholarship awards for participating; if he advances beyond the first round, he will receive an additional \$1,500 in scholarship awards. First place winner receives \$18,000, second place receives \$16,000 and third place receives \$14,000 in scholarship awards.

### 92<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Department Convention is about 2½ months away. The Convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Spearfish. The schedule of events will be similar to past Conventions.

Thursday, June 17 – Administrative Committee  
Executive Committee

Friday, June 18 – Resolutions Committee  
Convention Committees  
Joint Memorial Services  
Joint Banquet

Saturday, June 19 – General Assembly Session  
No Parade – Social

Go – Getters Reception/Smorgasbord

Sunday, June 20 – General Assembly Continues  
Elections

Installation of new officers

Post Convention – Executive Committee Meeting

Hotels' phone numbers for additional hotels in Spearfish are:

Fairfield Inn by Marriott of Spearfish, 2720 1st Ave. E.,  
605-642-3500

Howard Johnson Express Inn of Spearfish, I-90 & Exit 14,  
605-642-8105

Quality Inn of Spearfish, 2725 1<sup>st</sup> Ave., 605- 642-2337

Roadway Inn & Suites of Spearfish, I-90 & Exit 14,  
605-642-2350

Please inform the Hotels, that you are attending The American Legion Convention. Special rates are available from some Hotels.

### CONVENTION BANQUET TICKETS

Tickets for the Joint Legion/Auxiliary/SAL Banquet at the State Convention will be available through advanced sales only. No tickets will be available at the door.

The banquet will feature a choice of Sliced Roast Beef in a mushroom and caramelized onion demi or Oven Roasted Airline Chicken dinners. The cost for tickets is \$25.00 per ticket. Send requests for tickets to Jerry Lolley, PO Box 181, Sturgis, SD 57785. Deadline for tickets is June 11, 2010.

In your request you must indicate how many Sliced Roast Beef in a mushroom and caramelized onion demi dinners and/or how many Oven Roasted Airline Chicken dinners you are ordering. Send \$25.00 for each dinner ticket.

### 2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

The 2010 legislative session was a successful session for The American Legion and the veterans organizations of South Dakota. All but two bills passed through the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor. All four of The American Legion lobbyists testified for bills. Your American Legion lobbyists are Ken Orrock, John Dewell, Warren Aas, and Denny Brenden. Below is a list of bills that will become law:

**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..

**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.

**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.

**HB 1185** – This bill would provide property tax benefits to the surviving spouses of certain disabled veterans..

**HB 1048** – This bill would revise certain provisions relating to a previous appropriation for National Guard armory construction.

**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.

**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.

The two bills that did not pass were the following:

**SB 76** – This bill would revise the composition of the State Veterans' Commission. .

**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.

### MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

2010 membership stands at 22,290 or 90.94% of the 2010 membership goal.

