



Up To Now!

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COMMANDER MARTENS ANNOUNCES MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

Department Commander Rod Martens of Black Hawk, member of the Piedmont Post, has announced that the 2010 MidWinter Conference will be held at Cedar Shore Resort in Ocoma, Friday-Sunday, February 12-14, 2010.

Commander Martens has announced that the format for the MidWinter Conference will feature individual breakout sessions.

Friday evening, February 12, will feature the traditional Joint Legion/Auxiliary/SAL Banquet at 7:00 p.m. preceded by a one-hour no-host cocktail period. The Banquet ticket coupon can be found in the October issue of The South Dakota Legion News. This coupon can be used to order your banquet ticket(s). Again, this year as in the past, there will be no banquet tickets sold at the door the evening of the banquet. Your ticket must be purchased in advance by using the coupon in the October issue of The South Dakota Legion News.

This year the keynote speaker at the Joint Banquet will be National Commander Clarence Hill of the Department of Florida.

On Saturday, February 13, the conference will start with the Joint Session of The American Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion from 8:30-10:30 a.m. commencing at 10:30 a.m., The American Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion will convene into their own sessions. The American Legion will have separate rooms for the programs being hosted.

The Go-Getter Reception and Smorgasbord will be held at the Ocoma Community Center on Saturday evening commencing at 6:30 p.m. The Go-Getter's cards will be available for pick-up at the State Headquarters Registration Desk in the lobby of the Cedar Shore Resort event center starting at 12:00 noon on Friday.

On Sunday, February 14, there will be a Joint Non-Denominational Religious Service at 8:30 a.m. in the Cedar Shore Resort Convention Center. Department Chaplain Charles Walker of Pierre will be in charge of the arrangements for the service.

Following the closing of the Annual MidWinter Conference, the Department Finals for The South Dakota American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program "A Constitutional Speech Contest" will be held at the Cedar Shore Resort.

FREE APPLEBEE'S MEALS ON VETERANS DAY

In recognition of your service to our country, all veterans and active duty military personnel are invited to eat free at Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar Restaurants this Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11, 2009.

Applebee's launched a pilot program last year on Veterans Day offering free entrees to military service personnel and veterans. Because the response was so overwhelmingly positive, Applebee's is extending the invitation throughout the country this year. All U.S. veterans and active duty military with proof of current or former military service, an American Legion Membership Card or other service organization membership card, will eat free at all Applebee's nationwide on Veterans Day.

SOUTH DAKOTA LEGIONNAIRES RECEIVE NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

The American Legion National Commander Clarence Hill of the Department of Florida has announced the following national appointments for South Dakota Legionnaires:

PDC Larry L. Price of Redfield – a one-year appointment as Vice Chairman of The American Legion National Americanism Commission.

PDC Darrel Haskell of Aberdeen (member of the Conde American Legion Post), Rick MacDonald of Hermosa, Byron Calties of Watertown and Mark Weinmann of Canton (member of the Hudson American Legion Post) – one-year appointments as Vice Chairmen of The American Legion Americanism Council.

PDC Glenn R. Green of Pierre (member of the Lake Preston American Legion Post) – one-year appointment as Vice Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee.

NEC Paul A. Evenson of Sioux Falls (member of the Garretson American Legion Post) – one-year term as chairman of the Foreign Relations Commission Liaison Committee.

Tim Jurgens of Milbank, Wayne Rohde of Brandon, Kenneth Orrock of Rapid City, and Dale Strom of Aberdeen – one-year terms as Vice Chairmen of The American Legion Foreign Relations Council.

PDC Gerald Goetzinger of Martin – one-year term as Vice Chairman of The American Legion Membership and Post Activities Committee.

Charemon Dunham of Iroquois – one-year term as the National Commander's Representative on The American Legion Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Committee.

PDC Donald Clarke of Wessington, Ron Kazmeirczak of Rapid City (member of the Hill City American Legion Post), and Betty "Sam" Vaughn of Brookings – one-year terms as Vice Chairmen of The American Legion National and Homeland Security Council.

PDC James Huls of Madison (member of the Salem American Legion Post) – one year term as a member of the Employment Committee.

PDC Ronald Tolrud of White – three year term as a general member of the Children & Youth Commission.

Alt NEC Philip Anderson of Piedmont – three year term as a member of the National Security Commission.

All appointments were confirmed by the National Executive Committee during its Fall Meeting at National Headquarters of The American Legion in Indianapolis, October 15-16, 2009.

TROOP CONNECTION PROGRAM

Commander Martens has initiated a program designed to enhance communication and connection with active duty troops. He has appointed Kathi Quinn, Adjutant of Howard Post 145, to be the Coordinator of this program. Assisting her is Dave Gutzmer, Commander of Lake Preston Post 63. Other members appointed are Karen Brown of DeSmet American Legion Auxiliary Unit 138, and Greg Lemieux, Detachment Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, of Pierre. An American Legion Riders representative

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will be appointed at a later date.

In keeping with the "All Four One" theme of Commander Martens, this task force's mission is to provide guidance for individual Posts to set up their own committees to make contact with and support troops who are on active duty.

For more information contact the task force at *troopconnection@gmail.com*.

DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN WINS AWARD

National Historian James T. Higuera recently announced the results of the 2009 National American Legion History Contest.

One-Year Department Narrative History Contest — 1st place — Department of South Dakota.

Congratulations to Department Historian Dale Strom of Aberdeen for his hard work.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE TO MEET

The South Dakota American Legion Legislative Committee will hold its annual meeting Monday, November 2nd at the Pierre American Legion Post 8 Home in Pierre. The planning meeting is scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m. The current Legislative Commission is chaired by Gerald Goetzinger of Martin and its members are Alt NEC Phil Anderson of Piedmont, Ron Tolrud of White, Bob Miller of Kimball and Curt Halverson of Rapid City (member of the Custer American Legion Post).

The American Legion is anticipating a busy schedule during the 2010 Legislative session in Pierre. All members of the South Dakota American Legion are encouraged to become knowledgeable of the legislative issues The American Legion will pursue and speak to your local district legislators on these issues. Our efforts on behalf of the veterans of South Dakota are most effective when they are grassroots driven.

DEPARTMENT VAWS COMMITTEE TO MEET

The Department Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services (VAVS) Committee will hold its annual meeting Monday, November 9th at the Pierre American Legion Post 8 Home in Pierre. The planning meeting is scheduled to start at 1:00 p.m.

The committee will plan for the 2009 Christmas season at the VA facilities and the SD State Veterans Home. Traditionally, the committee makes recommendations for annual donations from the Department to the facilities to help offset the expenses of their Christmas parties and accepts recommendations from the Department Commander for gifts from the Department to each facility.

The committee strongly recommends that American Legion Posts begin planning now for the Posts contributions and/or donations to the facilities during the Christmas season.

VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day is Wednesday, November 11. Make sure that your Post and community have plans for this significant day by coordinating a meaningful program and ceremony in your area. The American Legion should not be waiting to be asked to participate in Veterans Day – The American Legion should be leading the way.

The American Legion National Headquarters prepares a suggested speech for Veterans Day each year. The 2009 American Legion Veterans Day Speech is already available and can be requested from State Headquarters in Watertown.

BOYS STATE PLANNING MEETING TO BE HELD

South Dakota American Legion Boys State Director Tom Tyrrell has called for the annual planning meeting of the South Dakota American Legion Boys State Corporation members and Board of

Directors which will be held in Pierre at Pierre American Legion Post 8 on Thursday, November 19th. This will be the initial planning meeting for the 2010 American Legion Boys State Session.

If you have an interest in Boys State and would like to get involved in a program that offers great rewards, contact State Headquarters about the opportunities available through Boys State.

FOUR VETERANS FORUMS REMAINING

Department Service Officer Warren Aas is busy conducting veterans' forums in the state of South Dakota. The start time for all the forums is 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served during and after the forums.

The remaining schedule for the veterans' forums is as follows:

District 1: Wednesday, October 28, VFW Post, Brandon, SD.

District 2: Thursday, October 29, American Legion Post Home, Arlington, SD.

District 3: Thursday, November 5, American Legion Post Home, Clark, SD.

District 4: Wednesday, November 4, Community Center, Agency Village, SD

EMPLOYER OF THE VETERANS AWARD DEADLINE

State Employment Committee Chairman Gary Warne reminds Posts that the deadline for submitting "The Employer of Veterans Award" is November 2, 2009. A letter went out to all Post Commanders September 30, along with an application, in the *Up To Now*. There are three different categories: small (50 or fewer employees), medium (51-200 employees), large (201 or more employees).

Please submit all applications to Gary Warne, 927 Willow Drive, Aberdeen, SD 57401-3001. If additional applications are needed contact Chairman Warne or State Headquarters.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The forms for nominating local area teachers for The American Legion Department of South Dakota 2010 Educator of the Year Program are now available from State Headquarters in Watertown.

This program, sponsored in conjunction with the National Education Week (November 15-21), is an excellent opportunity to provide valuable recognition to an educator from your community. Each Post should sponsor a nominee from a local school. That educator is then recognized by your local American Legion Post as your community's American Legion Educator of the Year and the nomination package is submitted to your District Commander.

Each District then selects a District Educator of the Year who is recognized by the District organization. The District selection is then nominated to the Department for competition in the Department's 2010 Educator of the Year competition. The educator selected by the Department is recognized at the Annual Department Convention; this year in Spearfish, SD.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

2010 membership stands at 17,380 or 70.91% of the Department's 2010 membership goal. Thank you for your hard work in membership.

Commander Martens has pledged to the National Commander that The Department of South Dakota would achieve 93.4% by March 10th. If this goal is achieved, the Department would receive \$2,000 for computer equipment. We need your help!