BILLY OXFORD ELECTED NATIONAL COMMANDER
INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 29, 2019) – James W. “Bill” Oxford was elected national commander of the nearly two million member American Legion today in Indianapolis, during the organization’s 101st national convention. He has been a member of the nation’s largest veterans organization since 1986. A native of Lenoir, N.C., Oxford is a paid-up-for-life member and past commander of Post 29 in Lenoir. He served as department (state) commander of the North Carolina American Legion from 2010 to 2011. A veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, Oxford was an aviation electronic technician for the A-6 Intruder and served in Vietnam during his initial enlistment. After being discharged as a sergeant in 1970, Oxford joined the North Carolina National Guard. He subsequently attended officer’s candidate school and transferred to the U.S. Army Reserve, where he ultimately retired as a colonel after more than 34 years of military service.

Oxford has served at every level of The American Legion. A former mayor and city council of Cajah’s Mountain, N.C., he has worked since he was a high school student, with most of his career choices being in the maintenance and engineering field. He earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies and multiple safety and environmental certificates.

Oxford has volunteered as a coach, umpire, referee and administrator in several youth athletic programs, including service as the public address announcer for the Post 29 American Legion Baseball team. An active volunteer with several organizations, Oxford is a member of Masonic Lodge-York Scottish Rite and the North Carolina Army Retirees Council. His theme as national commander of The American Legion is “a foundation for the future,” as the organization enters its second century of service.

Oxford and his wife, Frances, have been married since 1967. They have a son, Charles (married to Deah Reid), and a daughter, Jackie (married to Mike Carr). They also have four grandsons, Isaiah, Micah, Oxford and his wife, Frances, have been married since 1967. They have a son, Charles, (married to Deah Reid), and a daughter, Jackie, (married to Mike Carr). They also have four grandsons, Isaiah, Micah, Jarrett and Dawson.

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FAIR
Commander Nelson would like to thank all the volunteers that helped at the State Fair this past weekend inside the Veterans building. The fair was very busy the first four days with numerous visitors coming in. A special thank you to PDC Hugh “Homer” Holmes and Gary Henle for spending multiple days at the booth representing us!

STATE CEMETERY GROUND BREAKING
The ground breaking ceremony for the new South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery will occur on September 9th at 9 a.m. State Commander Fred Nelson is requesting a very strong American Legion presence at this ceremony.

FALL DISTRICT MEETING DATES/LOCATIONS
- District 1—Sept 29 @ Eagle Butte, Social 10 am, joint meeting 11 am, lunch 11:45, Legion meeting 1 pm.
- District 2—Sept 28 @ Post 71 Hot Springs. Social 9 am, Meeting 10 am. Meal $10/person following the meeting.
- District 3—Sept 7 @ Pierre Post 8. Social-noon. Meeting-1 pm
- District 4—Sept 8 @ Leola, Social-4pm, Meal-5pm, meeting 6pm.
- District 5—Sept 6 @ White. Social at 2:30 p.m. with Coffee/cookies/ice cream. 3:00 p.m. meeting.
- District 6—Sept 14 @ Wessington Springs. Social 5 pm, Meal 6 pm, meeting at 7 pm. Auxiliary will meet at Courthouse.
- District 7—Sept. 15 @ Madison Legion at the VFW, Social 2:00 pm, Meeting 3:00 pm meeting Coffee, cookies bars after. Auxiliary place TBD
- District 8—Sept. 13 @ Wagner. Social at 5pm, meeting at 6pm, and lite lunch afterwards. Ladies meet at the Methodist Church.

SAL DET. COMMANDER CALLS FOR FALL MEETINGS
SAL Commander Terry Hanson requests that all SAL Squadrons send representation to the fall meetings. He will have a SAL meeting in each District, the SAL will do the opening with the Legion and then break off into a separate group. Topics to discuss are Charters, supporting the Legion programs and membership.

SEPTEMBER 11th MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATE
A reminder for Post Adjutants and membership chairman. September 11th is our first membership target date for 50% of your goal. Memberships must be at State Headquarters the morning of September 10th.

DISTRICT ORATORY CONTESTS
District American Legion Americanism Chairs, and the counties under the jurisdiction of each are as follows:
- DIST. 1 – (Butte, Corson, Dewey, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Perkins, Ziebach counties) Chair: Ken Sabers, (ksabers@rushmore.com) 1908 Butte View Dr. Sturgis, SD 57785. District Contest to be held at Sturgis American Legion Post 33, January 12, 2020, 1:00pm. Storm date, January 19, same time and place.
- DIST. 2 – (Bennett, Custer, Fall River, Haakon, Jackson, Jones, Mellette, Pennington, Shannon, Todd counties) Chair: Paul Douglas, 622 Auburn Dr, Rapid City, SD 57701. District Contest to be held at Rapid City American Legion Post 22, 818 E. St. Patrick St., Rapid City, January 12, 2020 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 19, 2020, 2:00 p.m. same place.
- DIST. 3 – (Gregory, Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Lyman, Potter, Stanley, Sully, Tripp counties) Chair: Larry Madsen, (larry_madsen@hotmail.com) or 906 E Commercial Ave., Gettysburg, SD 57442. District Contest to be held at the Faith Lutheran Church Christian Living Center, 714 N Grand Ave, Pierre, SD. JANUARY 12, 2020 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 19 same time and place.
- DIST. 4 – (Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, McPherson, Spink, Walworth counties) Chair: Dale Strom, (dale_strom@yahoo.com) 115 N. Kline St, Aberdeen, SD 57401. District Contest to be held at the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 431 W Melgaard Rd, Aberdeen, SD 57401 January 5, 2020, 3:00 pm. Storm date, January 12th, same time and place.
- DIST. 5 – (Brookings, Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Marshall, Roberts counties) chair: Shelli Romeu (shelliromeu@gmail.com) PO Box 284, Watertown, SD 57201. District Contest will be held at Watertown Post home, Jan. 19, 2020, 1:30 p.m. Storm date, Jan. 26, same time and place.
- DIST. 6 – (Aurora, Beadle, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Je-
rauld, Kingsbury, Miner, Sanborn counties) Chair: Tim Thomas, (photostoday@midstates.net) 112 S Merrill St Chamberlain SD 57325. District Contest to be held at the Chamberlain High School, 1000 Sorenson Dr., Chamberlain, SD, 57325, January 5th, 2020, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 12th, same time and place.

**DIST. 7** – (Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Minnehaha, Moody, Union counties) Chair: Bill Hntimeter, wpheji@siouxvalley.net, 509 W. 9th St., Dell Rapids, SD 57022. District Contest to be held at Humbolt American Legion Post Home, Humboldt, SD 57035, January 12, 2020, 2:00 p.m. Storm date January 19th same time and place.

**DIST. 8** – (Butte, Charles Mix, Clay, Douglas, Hutchinson, Turner, Yankton counties) Chair: District Contest to be held at the Yankton Public Library, 515 Walnut St, Yankton SD 57078, January 25, 2020, 10:00 a.m. Storm Date February 1, 2020, same time and place.

**ORATORY CONTEST COMPLETION DATES**
The Americanism Commission has set the following completion dates for the oratory contests.
- Post contests completed by January 19th
- District contests completed by February 2nd
- State contest on February 23 at 10:30

**BIDS TO HOST 2024 STATE CONVENTION**
*No bids were submitted to host the 2024 State Convention at the 101st State Convention, the DEC will now have to decide the host/location. Bids are being accepted from Posts wishing to host the 2024 South Dakota American Legion Convention*
The offer must be submitted in writing by the prospective host Post, signed by the Post Commander and attested to by the Post Adjutant. Bids must reach State Headquarters in Watertown by **January 17, 2020**. The DEC will decide where to host the 2024 Convention during the 2020 MidWinter Conference.

**NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND**
The east coast of our Nation is currently waiting for the pending destruction of Hurricane Dorian. The National American Legion is standing by to support American Legion Posts and veterans that will be impacted by the hurricane. Donations can be made by visiting this website: [https://www.legion.org/emergency](https://www.legion.org/emergency) or can be sent to State HQ’s and they will be sent to the NEF.

**FOUNDATION DONATIONS**
Remember the South Dakota American Legion Foundation when your Post considers donations / gifts. This foundation will be used by future generations of Legionnaires to fund the American Legion programs. Donations can be marked as a memorial to those Legion members who have passed onto Post Everlasting. If the Post knows someone who wants to make a larger donation and needs assistance with ensuring the endowment goes to the programs they want to support, please contact the Dept. Adjutant at adjutant@sdlegion.org.

**HONOR FLIGHTS**
The MIDWEST Honor Flight is having a meet and greet open house on **Saturday September 7 at 3-6 pm** at the Residence Inn by Marriott Rapid. This is a great opportunity to meet and ask questions. The flights go out of the Sioux Falls and Rapid City airports; is a non profit organization run by a SAL member from Iowa. For more information, please go to the MIDWEST honor Flight website: [http://www.midwestehonorflight.org/](http://www.midwestehonorflight.org/)

**IRS TAX-EXEMPT STATUS**
In the last few months I have had a few questions concerning Post’s IRS tax-exempt status or revocations of that status. Posts are required by the IRS to submit a 990 form every year. If the IRS does not receive this form, they will revoke the tax-exempt status of the Post. To get your Tax-exempt status back you have to apply and pay a sizeable fee. This process takes time (months) and can challenge even the most patient of individuals. Posts must be proactive on this.

**ELECTRONIC UP TO NOW AND LEGION NEWS**
Legionnaires can sign up for the Up To Now and the Legion News to be delivered by e-mail by going to [https://www.sdlegion.org/](https://www.sdlegion.org/)

**request-emailed-newsletters/ and filling in the form. After they submit the request they will need to check your e-mail and confirm they had requested to be added to the distribution list.**

**HAVE YOU WROTE YOUR POST’S HISTORY YET?**
If you haven’t written your Post’s History and posted it on the Centennial website, please do so. Chairman Jurgens has re-quested that all American Legion Posts write up a brief history and put it on the Centennial Page on the National website. In writing the history, you’ll get a sense of pride in what Legionnaires have gone through in maintaining the local Post. Also, if your Post is named after an individual, you’ll gain a feeling of satisfaction in letting the world know why. Deadlines are running short and this needs to be in place so other events surrounding the 100th Anniversary can be accomplished.

**CENTENNIAL CONVENTION MEMORABILIA**
Post 15 has convention t-shirts and 100 year pins for sale. T shirts $20.00 and pins $5.00. E-mail Post Adjutant Mike Driscoll at jarhead9999@gmail.com to request your Centennial memorabilia.

**POST SOCIAL MEDIA**
Social media (example: Facebook / Twitter) can be a beneficial part of a Posts communication methods for their community. Properly implemented it can increase support from the surrounding communities and American Legion Posts. DSO/Asst. Adjutant Courtney VanZanten can assist Posts on best practices on this.

**UPDATING OF MYLEGION**
**With the new membership year comes an opportunity to update your memberships information in MYLEGION. An important piece of information that can be entered is e-mail addresses. When Posts Certify their officers, we send updates to Post Officers based on their positions in MYLEGION. The recent Americanism e-mail had a large amount Americanism Officers with no e-mail address or a fair amount of returned e-mails with bad addresses.**

**CERTIFICATION OF 2020 OFFICERS**
Post Adjutants are reminded that they have a responsibility to certify the Post’s 2020 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 2020 Post Officers can be found in the 2018-2019 SD American Legion Adjutant’s Administrative and Awards Manual. One sheet explains the certification process, and the very next page is the Post Officers Certification Form.

**Newly elected Post Officers will not be placed on mailing lists by State or National Headquarters or receive their 2020 membership cards until the Post is certified.**

**POSTS WHO HAVE NOT CERTIFIED THEIR OFFICERS**
**District 1 posts: 124, 239**
**District 2 posts: 75, 238, 265, 294, 297, 302**
**District 3 posts: 77**
**District 4 posts: 57, 68**
**District 5 posts: ALL CERTIFIED GREAT JOB!**
**District 6 posts: 158**
**District 7 posts: ALL CERTIFIED GREAT JOB!**
**District 8 posts: 30, 237**

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**
2019 Membership: **18,263** or **91.31%** of a goal of 20,001. 2020 Membership: **9,685** or **49.06%** of goal of 19,747.

Membership Chairman Ed Stringer’s theme is: "MEMBERSHIP IS STRENGTH, LET’S GET STRONGER!"