Merrill St Chamberlain SD 57325. District Contest to be held at the Chamberlain High School, 1000 Sorenson Dr., Chamberlain, SD, 57325, January 17, 2021, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 24th, same time and place.

DIST. 7 – Chair: Bill Hunter (wphjeh@siouxvalley.net), 509 W. 9th St., Dell Rapids, SD 57022. District Contest to be held at the Dell Rapids American Legion Post Home, January 10, 2021, 2:00 p.m. Storm date January 17th, same time and place.

DIST. 8 – Contact: Greg Geiman (speedy_82501@yahoo.com) 410 Stafford St, Scotland, SD 57059. District Contest to be held at the NFAA HQ (Archery), 800 Archery Lane, Yankton SD 57078, January 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m. Storm Date January 23, 2021, same time and place.

**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS INTRODUCES TRAINING TUESDAYS**

The American Legion National Headquarters staff will present 60 to 90 minute on line training sessions with topics aimed at Post level Commanders and Adjutants. Training is scheduled for the last Tuesday of each month beginning at 6 p.m. central time. Topics will vary each month. National is working at adding a direct link to the training. Until that is complete, the easiest way to get to the training is to go to legion.org, go to the search bar towards the top right and type in Training Tuesdays which should take you to a link to the training.

**VA CHRISTMAS PARTIES**

You may have noticed the VA Christmas parties have been deleted from the “Important Dates To Remember” above. We were notified the Christmas parties are still scheduled at all the South Dakota VA facilities, however, due to COVID the VA will not allow visitors to attend. Instead, the Staffs will be bringing holiday cheer to the veterans. The Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services at each hospital are encouraging you to support the parties with donations that will provide the holiday activities for the veterans who will be in the hospital during the holidays. Donations can be sent to Voluntary Services at each hospital or they can be sent to Department Headquarters with a note stating where you would like the donation to go to.

**FALLEN HEROES BRIDGE DEDICATIONS**

Naming bridges in honor of combat veterans who died while serving their country is a new initiative of Governor Kristi Noem and the South Dakota Departments of Military, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs. The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting several State Bridge Dedication Ceremonies in the next several months to honor Combat Veterans killed in action:

NOV 11, the ceremony will be held at the Parkston High School Auditorium at 9:00 am (CT) to honor SSG Janson Montefering and SGT Jeremiah Boehmer. Please consider attending the ceremonies and wear your Legion Cap to honor those who gave their all in support of our country.
NATIONAL COMMANDERS AWARDS FOR POSTS AND INDIVIDUALS.

Foundation for the Future pin: National Commander Oxford will award this pin to any Legionnaire who recruits three new members before June of 2021. A new member is anyone who was not a member in 2020. The Post Adjutant is responsible for filling out the form but you can help him out by ensuring he has the information he needs. Additional information and the application form can be found at the National Website, legion.org/commander/postexcellence.

Legion Family Honor Ribbon: Any Post Family (Post, Auxiliary and/or SAL and/or Riders) which all organizations make 100% of their membership goals is eligible for this award. Additional information and the form is available at legion.org/commander/ribbon. The award must go through the Dept Adjutant before going to National.

Post Excellence Award: To earn this award, the Post is required to achieve excellence in four areas; meet 103% of its membership goal, submit the Consolidated Post Report on time, attain a 90% renewal rate and prove community activity. The District Commander is responsible for certifying their posts who meet the requirements. More information is available at legion.org/commander/postexcellence.

103% membership award: The National Commander will award this incentive pin to any post, district, county, or department commander or membership chairman who achieves 103% of their membership goal. Additional information and forms are available at legion.org/commander/103percent. The forms must be submitted through the Dept Adjutant.

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER CAP PINS

Commander Nelson will award his 2020-2021 Cap Pin to individuals for:
- Participating in Oratorical Contest
- Working with Boys State
- Working with Youth Trooper program
- Participating in Honor Guard at veterans funeral
- Working with American Legion Baseball

A Legionnaire is allowed only one pin. The Post Adjutant must certify participation. Additional information and the certification form can be found in the 2020-2021 Post Adjutant’s Administrative & Awards manual or at https://www.sdlegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/cap-pin-form-done.pdf

EMPLOYER AWARDS DEADLINE CHANGED

The original due date for employer awards as listed in the South Dakota Posts Adjutant’s Administrative and Awards manual was 15 Dec 2020. In order to give the Employment Committee ample time to review and select state winners, the due date is now 15 Nov 2020. Please note this change to the manual. Start looking for your local employers who should be recognized and submit the information as per the instructions (with due date change) to Depart HQ.

NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER/EMT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR.

Time to plan ahead. The due dates for Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer of the year were moved up to meet National timelines. Due dates are now December 31st from the District Commanders to Dept HQ. This is a great way to recognize those that put their lives on the line. Never to early to plan ahead.

THE AMERICAN LEGION BASIC TRAINING

Have you taken the Basic Training? The American Legion’s official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who simply want to expand their knowledge of the nation’s largest veterans service organization is now available online. Already taken the course? The American Legion Extension Institute has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam. For more information go to https://www legion.org/alei

REMINDER FOR POSTS TO FILE IRS FORM 990

Federal Tax regulations require every American Legion Post to file IRS Form 990. The form must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month at the end of the accounting period. You can download the form at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f990.pdf.

POSTS WHO HAVE NOT CERTIFIED OFFICERS FOR 2020-2021

The below listed Posts have not certified their Officers for 2020-2021 year. Until the officers have been certified, Post will not receive their 2021 membership cards. If you have a question about certification, contact the office at (605) 886-3604.

DISTRICT 1: Little Eagle #239 and Dupree #124

DISTRICT 2: Belvidere #144, Wanblee #269, Norris #310, Parmelee#295, St. Francis #297, Oelrichs #238, Batesland #281, Kyle #265, Pine Ridge #251, Porcupine #294, Manderson #302

DISTRICT 8: Parker #30

DID YOU KNOW? Most folks know of the battleship USS South Dakota BB-57, which earned great fame during WWII. They may also know of the new USS South Dakota SSN 790 which is one of the newest submarines to join the Navy fleet. But did you know there was a USS South Dakota ACR-9 that served during WWII? The ACR stands for Armored Cruiser and it escorted convoys during the war. However, when the US Navy decided they were to build another battleship, they needed the name USS South Dakota, so they renamed the ACR the USS Huron after the city of Huron in South Dakota. There have been many other Navy ships named after counties and towns in South Dakota, such as USS Brule APA-66, USS Codington County AK-173, USS Ogala CM-4, USS Rushmore LSD-47 and USS Custer APA-40. There will soon be another ship named after a South Dakota city, USS Pierre LCS-38. The Pierre will be a Littoral Combat Ship and the date it will join the fleet has not been determined.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:
The next membership target date is November 12. Each post should be at 65% of membership or more.

Congratulations to the following posts who have met Commander Nelson’s goal of 103% membership:
- Grenville Post 267 107.41%
- Aurora Post 230 103.7%
- Plankinton 106.25%

The Veterans Day membership target date is approaching fast. Every member who has paid their dues by Nov 12th is eligible for an award drawing. Everyone who recruits a new member by this date is entered into a drawing for a Legion wristwatch. The Post Adjutant or Membership chairman is responsible for certifying and ensuring recruiters names are received at Headquarters before Nov 12th. All Posts who meet their membership goals by this date will be presented a plaque. Memberships must be transmitted to Department Headquarters by the Nov 12th to be eligible.

2021 Membership: 12,473 or 72.01% of goal of 17,321

Membership Chairman Travise Flisrand’s theme for 2020-2021 is: Retain, Recruit and Educate...