



# Up To Now!

C.P. Van Delist – Department Adjutant  
[www.sdlegion.org](http://www.sdlegion.org) – Email: [adjutant@sdlegion.org](mailto:adjutant@sdlegion.org)

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Phone (605) 886-3604

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October 6, 2023

- Oct 7 SD Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication- WO1 Roger S. Cameron– Community Building, 311 W. Main, Pierpont, 2:30 pm (CT)
- Oct 9-12 National Fall Meetings
- Oct 9 Native American Day, **HQ Closed**
- Oct 10 Midwest Honor Flight, Mission 17
- Oct 14 SD Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication- 1LT Thomas M. Martin, Military Heritage Alliance, 1600 W. Russell St, Sioux Falls, 10am
- Oct 17 “Together We Care Tuesday” to benefit South Dakota Veterans’ Cemeteries Support Council , Applebee’s Spearfish (all day)
- Oct 18 Membership Target Date- Fall Meetings 55%
- Oct 21 Dist 7 Fall Meeting– Tea Post 266, 11am Social, 12pm Meal, 1pm Meeting
- Oct 21 Elvis Night/50’s Dance Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser, SD Military Heritage Alliance Center, Sioux Falls
- Oct 22 Dist 8 Fall Meeting– Springfield Post 132, 12pm social, 1pm meeting
- Oct 28 Dist 6 Fall Meeting– Wessington Springs Post 14, 11:00am Social, 12:00pm Meal, 1:00pm Meeting
- Oct 29 District 3 Fall Meeting– 1pm Social, 2pm Meeting at the AmericInn in Fort Pierre (Post 20 Host)
- Nov 3 SDDVA What’s Brewing Coffee and Conversation with Vets, Black Hills State Univ, Joy Center, 1351 St. Joe St, Spearfish, 1 pm
- Nov 4-Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair, Sturgis Community Center, 11:00am-2:00pm
- Nov 10 Veterans Day Observance, **HQ Closed**
- Nov 15 Membership Target Date– Veterans Day 65%
- Nov 15 he American Legion National Employment & Education Commission Awards due to HQ
- Nov 15 SD Veterans Council Meeting, DAV Headquarters, 1519 W. 51st Street, Sioux Falls, 9:00am
- Nov 15 SD Vets Council Legislative Round Tbl, Sioux Falls Post 15
- Nov 15 Employment Award Nomination Forms due to Dept HQ
- Nov 16 SD Vets Council Legislative Round Tbl, Watertown Post 17
- Nov 17 Veterans Council Legislative Round Table, Pierre Post 8
- Nov 17 MINGO (Music Bingo) Fundraiser for Midwest Honor Flight, Severance Brewing Co., Sioux Falls, 6:00–9:00 pm
- Nov 18-SD Vets Council Legislative Round Tbl-Rapid City Post 22
- Nov 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday, **HQ Closed**
- Dec 5 Governor’s Budget Address
- Dec 16 Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, Sioux Falls 11:00 am
- Dec 31 Department EMT of the Year Award due to HQ
- Dec 31 National Firefighter/EMT of the Year Award due to HQ
- Dec 31 The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award due to HQ

Do you have an event that you would like to share with the Department or push out to the Press? Please send requests to Department HQ and we can get it in the next Up-to-Now or push to more than 150 media outlets around the state. Please submit an Up-to-Now request no later than Monday before the first Friday of the month. For Press Releases, please allow 5 business days before the event. All requests should be sent to the [adjutant@sdlegion.org](mailto:adjutant@sdlegion.org).

### HAT IN THE RING

Chester Post 136 has endorsed Kevin Hempel for Department Vice Commander (Districts 3-8)

Greetings Legion Family!

Today, I want to talk to you about the self-serving importance of getting involved—actually going to meetings or events rather than being a paper member. Paper members are important too, but hear me out on why this is important for you:



Ever driven around new neighborhoods recently, and realized that parks really aren’t a thing anymore? Everybody seems to plan on having a swing set in their backyard. Front porches have all but disappeared too. It started in the 1950s, with technological advances in air conditioning and television. I recently read a book called “Bowling Alone,” that discussed just these phenomena and their effect on society and organizations like ours. We are self-isolating, and it’s not necessarily good for us.

Put into today’s world, social media and I have a mixed relationship. I love the fact that I can stay in touch with people that I’ve met from across time and space—I certainly would have fallen out of touch otherwise. It is wonderful to keep up on kiddos, accomplishments and moves through pictures and paragraphs. It is also a good way to promote events or inform people about the latest and greatest.

It is deceptive, however. I’m not actually being social with anybody. I’m not truly feeding that part of my brain that craves human interaction—I’m giving it a taste and leaving it wanting more. There are no handshakes or hugs on Facebook, no smiles or jokes told on the fly on Instagram. I’m usually not accomplishing work on LinkedIn. Social media isn’t as engaging as it is sold to be, and it leaves you doom scrolling.

People are tribal or social by nature. Sure, the world can be exhausting sometimes, but there lies within each of us a primal need for interaction. It isn’t filled by words on screens. It requires actual human interface. A sense of fulfillment. A sense of purpose.

I happen to know a great organization that can check those boxes—so in an attempt to be kinder to your own brain, volunteer at an event. Go to a meeting. Do something productive in your community. I can attest through my own experience that being an active Legionnaire—meaning getting up and participating—will engage those happy brain chemicals we want to trigger.

Go forth. Pursue Purpose.

--Courtney Steffen, Department Commander

## BASEBALL BIDS DUE

Bids for the 2025 Regional and State tournaments are due to the Athletic Commission no later than December 1, 2023. If you are interested in hosting one of the tournaments contact Beau Garcia for more information. beau.garcia2@gmail.com or 605-206-0347

## !!!!!!LEGISLATIVE ACTION NEEDED!!!!!!

You can contact your representative through our campaigns located at the National Grassroots Action Center. Share The American Legion's legislative priorities using the Legislative Agenda when you contact their office. While on the Grassroots Action Center page, be sure to sign up for legislative alerts so you can stay up to date on all of The American Legion's legislative campaigns.

<https://www.votervoicenet.com/AmericanLegion/home>

## USE OF THE LEGION EMBLEM OR BRAND MARK

The name, brand mark and emblems of The American Legion are registered service marks. To request limited licensed use of the name, brand mark and/or emblem, please complete the request form found at <https://www.legion.org/emblem/>. The process is very simple and typically results in approval within three business days.

## FALLEN HERO BRIDGE DEDICATIONS

South Dakota started a program in 2019 to honor Veterans killed in the line of duty by naming bridges in their honor. Following is a list of upcoming dedications. It would be great if Legionnaires in the area would attend to honor those who have fallen.

Oct 7- WO1 Roger S. Cameron- Community Building, 311 W. Main, Pierpont, 2:30 pm (CT)

Oct 14- 1LT Thomas M. Martin, Military Heritage Alliance, 1600 W. Russell St, Sioux Falls, 10am

## 2028 DEPT CONVENTION & MIDWINTER

Bids for the 2028 MidWinter are being accepted, at this time only one bid has been submitted from Chamberlin Post 3. Posts and Convention Centers who desire to submit bids to host the midwinter should send that information to the Dept Adjutant. Application forms are available from Dept HQ.

Bids for the 2029 MidWinter and Department Convention are being accepted at this time as well.

## FUTURE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AND MIDWINTER DATES AND LOCATIONS

2024 Mid-Winter	Deadwood	Feb 16-18
2024 Convention	Pierre	June 20-23
2025 MidWinter	Oacoma	Feb 14-16
2025 Convention	Huron	June 19-22
2026 MidWinter	Oacoma	Feb 20-22
2026 Convention	Aberdeen	June 18-21
2027 MidWinter	Oacoma	Feb 19-21
2027 Convention	Sioux Falls	June 16-19
2028 MidWinter	TBD	Feb 18-20
2028 Convention	Huron	June 15-18
2029 Mid-Winter	TBD	Feb 16-18

## NFL, NCAA TICKET DISCOUNTS

Veterans can access discounted NFL & NCAA tickets on ShopVCS.com. Not a member? Sign up for ShopVCS.com to verify your Veteran status and unlock deals on live sports. Plus, enjoy savings on theme parks, hotels, rental cars and more. This is an official Veteran Affairs Canteen Service program.

## DISTRICT ORATORICAL CONTESTS

DIST. 1- Chair: Mike Pauling, (michaelpauling@ymail.com), 13318 Sunshine Valley Rd., Piedmont, SD 57769. Contest at Spearfish Post 164, 3102 E. Fairgrounds Loop, Spearfish, Jan 21, 2024, 2:00pm. Storm date, Jan 28th, same time and place.

DIST. 2- Chair: Doug Harris (doughinut@gmail.com), 4913 Charmwood Dr., Rapid City, SD 57701. Contest at SDSM&T

Classroom Bldg., 501 E. Saint Joseph St., Jan 7, 2024, 10:00 a.m. Storm date, Jan 14th, same time and place.

DIST. 3- Chair: Larry Madsen, (larry\_madsen@hotmail.com), 906 E. Commercial Ave., Gettysburg, SD 57442. Contest at the Faith Lutheran Church Christian Living Center, 714 N. Grand Ave., Pierre, SD. Jan 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 21st, same time and place.

DIST. 4- Chair: Dale Strom, (dale\_strom@yahoo.com), 115 N. Kline St., Aberdeen, SD 57401. District Contest at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 431 W. Melgaard Rd., Aberdeen, SD, Jan 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 14th, same time and place.

DIST. 5- Chair: Clayton Nei, (pandcnei@gmail.com), 18257 465th Ave., Castlewood, SD 57223. Contest held Castlewood Lutheran Church, Jan 6, 2024, 1:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 13th, same time and place.

DIST. 6- Chair: Tim Thomas, (photostoday@midstatesd.net), 112 S. Merrill St., Chamberlain SD 57325. Contest at the Kimball Legion Post, 232 S. Main, Kimball, SD, Jan 7, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 14th, same time and place.

DIST. 7- Chair: Linda Liddell, (Lliddell08@gmail.com), 1016 NW 5th St., Madison, SD 57042. District Contest to be held at the Humboldt Community Center, Jan 21st, 2:00 p.m..

DIST. 8- Contact: Joseph Knoer, (josephknoer24@gmail.com), 1215 Lincoln St. #101, Vermillion, SD 57069. Contest at the Al Neuharth Media Center, 555 N. Dakota St., Vermillion, Jan 20, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Storm date Jan 27th, same time and place.

## 2024 MID-WINTER UPDATES

The Mid-winter Conference is being hosted by District 1, and will be held at the Deadwood Lodge, in Deadwood, SD., Friday, 16 February through Sunday, 18 February 2024. A block of rooms has been set aside beginning with 20 rooms for early arrivals on Thursday, 15 February, and another 80 rooms for arrivals on Friday, 17 February. **Anyone requiring a Hospitality Suite or room larger than the standard king or double queen, please contact David Booze at 605-484-5328 for reservation arrangements.** All who require just the **Standard King or Standard Double Queen room, reservations can be made by calling the Deadwood Lodge, phone number 605-584-4800.** The rate for the Standard King or Double Queen room is **\$95 plus applicable taxes.** Be sure to **mention** you will be **attending the American Legion Mid-winter conference.** The Deadwood Lodge is a 100% smoke free facility. The Deadwood Lodge allows dogs; however, all dogs must be declared at the time of making the reservation or upon check-in. Other details such as the Joint Banquet, Go-Getters, and training sessions will be coming soon.

## POST CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS

Request for digital versions of your Constitution and By Laws went out in September. HQ is working to ensure they have a current version of your Constitution and By Laws. If you can not email a copy to the Adjutant please send a paper copy to:

American Legion Department of South Dakota

Attn: Adjutant

PO Box 67

Watertown, SD 57201

This should be done annually to make sure everything is up to date. Additionally, please ensure Department Headquarters has a copy of your updated Constitution and By Laws. Thanks for your help with this important process.

## EMERGENCY CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

If you are eligible for VA Health Care it is important to know that you can use your local emergency room during a medical emer-

gency. The VA states “A medical emergency is an injury, illness or symptom so severe that a delay in seeking immediate medical attention would be reasonably expected to be hazardous to life or health. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.”

Ensure you check with your VA Provider to see if you qualify.

When you seek care inform the emergency care provider to report your emergency treatment to the VA Centralized Emergency Care Reporting Center as soon as possible after your treatment starts by using the VA Emergency Care Reporting portal or calling the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline. You or someone on your behalf can also report the care to the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline: 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842) or online at <https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov/#/request>

#### FOUNDATION UPDATE

This year alone the South Dakota American Legion Foundation has given back \$15,000 to the department for use in our programs. Of that \$5,000 went to the National Veteran’s and Children Foundation. Now the South Dakota American Legion Foundation is conducting a Beef Raffle to raise funds for our programs. Tickets are \$10 each and can be obtained from any of the board members, Paul Evenson, Jim Huls, Denny Brenden, Doug Feltman or Jim Kurtz. The drawing will be on Feb 16th at the Mid-Winter Conference. 1st Prize is \$500 in Beef Certificates, 2nd Prize is \$300 in Beef Certificates, and 3rd \$200 in Beef Certificates. Get your tickets TODAY!

#### DEPARTMENT FLOAT

Have an event coming up and want to stand out? Get the department float. A donation is asked for to use the float of \$20 and should be sent to HQ after reserving the float. It is the responsibility of the organization that wants to use the float to arrange with the current holder of the float where and when to pick up the float. Call Dept HQ 605-866-3604 or Membership Chair Bill Peters 605-360-6547

#### AMERICAN LEGION BASIC TRAINING COURSE

Have you completed the Basic Training Course? It is a great way to better understand your American Legion. The course covers five topics: history and organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism; and Children & Youth. Each topic offers ways in which American Legion Family members can advance the organization’s values and services in their local communities. Following the Course Conclusion, a 40-question exam is provided. Graduates can download and print a certificate of completion and order a Basic Training Graduate pin from Emblem Sales. Take the Basic Training course online at [www.legion.org/training](http://www.legion.org/training).

#### 2024 SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE

The 2024 South Dakota American Legion College will be April 27 & 28th. More details to come soon but mark your calendar.

#### REMINDER TO ALL AMERICAN LEGION POSTS TO FILE IRS FORM 990

Federal tax regulations require every American Legion Post to file IRS form 990. This must be filled out by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your organization’s accounting period. 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. The form can be downloaded at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f990.pdf>.

#### MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Headquarters has received the 2024 membership cards. *Posts who have submitted their officer certifications will be eligible to receive their cards.* Certify your officers NOW. The form for certifying

officers is found in the Department’s 2022-2023 Post Adjutant’s Administrative and Awards Manual online at the Department website.

#### POSTS WHO HAVE NOT CERTIFIED THEIR OFFICERS FOR 2022-2023

The following posts need to contact Judy at headquarters to find out about certifying their officers and membership cards

##### District 1:

Bullhead #82                      Timber Lake #83                      Isabel #120  
Dupree #124                      Little Eagle #239

##### District 2:

Belvidere #144                      Oelrichs #238                      Pine Ridge #251  
Kyle #265                      Porcupine #294                      Parmelee #295  
St. Francis #297                      Manderson #302                      Norris #310  
New Underwood #256

##### District 3:

Blunt #77                      Bonesteel #36                      Witten #167

##### District 4: ALL Complete

##### District 5: ALL Complete

##### District 6:

Stickney #26                      Pukwana #201

##### District 7:

Flandreau #70                      Alcester #86                      Bridgewater #111  
Baltic #175                      Sioux Falls Post 911

##### District 8:

Lake Andes #10                      Parker #30

#### NATIONAL COMMANDER’S MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE PINS

American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer will award his national commander “Be the One” dog tag pin to any Legionnaire who obtains two new members into The American Legion. One to replace you and one for growth.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2024 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2023 membership year. Transfers do not count as new members.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. New Auxiliary members and Sons of The American Legion members do not count toward this incentive. Only one pin will be awarded per individual. Upon receipt, national membership staff will confirm the names in the national database and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it. [https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/documents/seehafer\\_twonewmembers.pdf](https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/documents/seehafer_twonewmembers.pdf)

#### 103 PERCENT MEMBERSHIP AWARD

American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer will award his “Be the One” dog tag to any post commander, district commander, county commander, division commander, department commander or membership chairman who achieves 103% of their assigned membership goal for 2024.

[https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/documents/2024\\_103percentmembership.pdf](https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/documents/2024_103percentmembership.pdf)

#### NATIONAL COMMANDER POST EXCELLENCE AWARD

To qualify for the American Legion’s Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, submission of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR), attaining a 90% renewal rate, and community activity.

The purpose of this award is membership growth, exposure of American Legion values to the community, and increased visibility of the American Legion Family through service projects. A post achieving this qualification will have had numerous post members involved in planning and achieving these goals. Many posts are already active in these areas and will qualify without

extra effort. Others, however, will need to increase their efforts in one or more areas to qualify for the award.

The standard to be achieved in each area is as follows:

**Membership:** The post must attain at least 103% of their membership goal. At least one post officer attends district meetings.

**Consolidated Post Report:** CPRs must be submitted by *July 1*.

The American Legion's federal charter requires the submission of an annual report to Congress on activities for the year. MyLegion.org has made it simple for a post to submit its CPR in a timely manner.

**90% Renewal Rate:** The post must renew at least 90% of their members that were on the 2023 roster.

**Community Activity:** The post must conduct an event that connects the local community with The American Legion post. The objective is to open your doors, welcome the community in, and educate them on what The American Legion is all about and how the post is an asset to the community. Posts do not need to have a physical building to accomplish this. This activity can be held in a park, a community center, or anywhere the post can welcome and interact with the local community.

**Certification for the award:** The district commander responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria. The district commander will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to department headquarters. That list should include the post name, phone number, address and commander's name. If possible, accompany the last two criteria with copies of press releases submitted to the local media about the projects to show that the projects were not only accomplished but that an attempt was made to enhance the image of The American Legion through local media. The copy submitted should include a date and time stamp showing receipt by the media outlet.

The department adjutant will transmit information as posts qualify to The American Legion National Headquarters.

### 100% AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY RIBBON

American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer will award his 100% American Legion Family Ribbon to any American Legion Family that achieves 100 percent membership by the 2024 100% membership target date. For this award, the Legion Family is defined as a post and/or any combination of an Auxiliary unit or Sons squadron. Each must achieve 100% membership to qualify for the award. The department adjutant will transmit information to: The American Legion National Headquarters

### DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN MESSAGE

Greetings to all our members:

October has arrived and that means we have completed 3 months of our 2024 membership year. As of October 2, 2023, our number is

**10,307**

Thank you all that have joined or have renewed. Our target number this year is **16,261**. Having said that can I ask you that have not renewed to do so sooner than later. I encourage you to do it before the end of the year. Yes, your membership is good till December 31. Those of you that leave for the warm country, and you want to visit American Legion posts on the way after December 31, you may have an issue getting in without a current membership. This year our vision is "Pursue Purpose". The Vision is obtained through working together as a team and, yes, membership is part of it. I ask all of you to ask yourself this question. "Why do I belong to the American Legion?"

Until next time be that "Eye of the Tiger".

God Bless you and your family  
God Bless the American Legion  
God Bless the America

Bill Peters



# AMERICAN LEGION

# BRE

# ETHEE

# ONE

Hello South Dakota Legionnaires!

There's a crispness in the air and that means it's time to touch on the Children and Youth program in South Dakota. The Children & Youth program focuses on Child Health, Child Safety, and Family Support. Information about these programs can be found on the Department website under the Donations menu.

**Temporary Financial Assistance:** Since its establishment in 1925, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program has awarded cash grants to minor children of veterans who are eligible for American Legion membership. These grants help families in need meet the cost of shelter, food, utilities, and health expenses, thereby keeping the child or children in a more stable environment.

TFA is limited to minor children (17 years or younger) whose biological parent, or legal guardian, is a veteran and is, or would have been, eligible for American Legion membership. American Legion membership is required. Children 18-20 years old will also be considered if a current disability requires special schooling or indefinite in-home care, or they are enrolled in an approved high school and unmarried. To be eligible for Legion membership, the parent or guardian must have served at least one day of active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States since December 7, 1941, and have been honorable discharged or are currently serving honorably.

No child is considered eligible for Temporary Financial Assistance until a complete investigation is conducted at the post or department level; a legitimate family need is determined; and all other available assistance resources have been utilized or exhausted. Additionally, the TFA application must originate and be filled out by someone at the local level. For more information, contact me, State Headquarters, your local County Veteran Service Officer.

If you would like to make a donation to the Temporary Financial Assistance program, send a check or money order, made out to South Dakota American Legion. Please write into the memo "TFA Fund."

**Operation Homefront** – This program was developed to help local Veterans with children living at home to collect and distribute school supplies and Christmas toys from donations made by the Dollar Tree within South Dakota. Local National Guard Armories family support groups are assisting these young Veterans by collecting these donations for distribution. Additionally, School supplies are also donated from various organizations and are distributed to Veterans with small children living at home at operational military bases. In South Dakota a backpack distribution program was held at Ellsworth Air Force Base on July 29 and volunteer Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders from Districts One and Two were there to assist. The South Dakota American Legion family has offered their future support with the collection and distribution of donations organized from Operation Homefront.

### **Children and Youth Award Program**

Each of us know outstanding adults or youth in our communities or perhaps your Post is exceptional. We want to know about this! There will be four award opportunities available under

the Children and Youth program tab found on the South Dakota Department of the American Legion website. Details on these awards, seen below, can be reviewed for their parameters effective November 1<sup>st</sup>.

- **100% POST CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORTING:** District Award (if each Post reports on their C&Y program, a department report would be submitted to National for a state award)
- **OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT in the programs of Children & Youth:** Individual Award
- **MOST OUTSTANDING POST CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAM:** *Post Award*
- **DEDICATED SERVICE to our nation's CHILDREN & YOUTH:** *Post Award*

Finally, I would like to thank every individual and the posts who have participated or helped with any of the Children & Youth programs over the past year. As a teacher in a high-need school district, I have seen the relief on parents' and children's faces when they receive donated school supplies. It may not seem like much, but every little bit helps. If you have any questions or suggestions for me, please don't hesitate to contact me! Helping the children in our community now sets the foundation for a brighter tomorrow!

Sincerely,

Kate Schmidt  
Department Children & Youth Chair  
110 8<sup>th</sup> St NW  
Wessington Springs, SD 57382  
(605) 353-5792  
catherine.schmidt@k12.sd.us