



Up To Now!

C.P. Van Delist – Department Adjutant
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Issued Monthly from State Headquarters at Watertown, S.D. 57201-0067

Phone (605) 886-3604

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November 3, 2023

- 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, 11am-2pm
- Nov 7 Athletic Commission Meeting, via MS Teams, 7pm
- Nov 8 VA&R Commission Meeting, via MS Teams, 7pm
- Nov 10 Veterans Day Observance, **HQ Closed**
- Nov 15 Membership Target Date– Veterans Day 65%
- Nov 15 The American Legion National Employment & Education Commission Awards due to Dept HQ
- Nov 15 SD Veterans Council Meeting, DAV Headquarters, 1519 W. 51st Street, Sioux Falls, 9:00am
- Nov 15 SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table, DAV Headquarters, 1519 W. 51st Street, Sioux Falls, 12pm
- Nov 15 Employment Award Nomination Forms due to Dept HQ
- Nov 16 SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table, Watertown Post 17, 12pm
- Nov 17 SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table, Pierre Post 8, 12pm
- Nov 17 MINGO (Music Bingo) Fundraiser for Midwest Honor Flight, Severance Brewing Co., Sioux Falls, 6pm–9pm
- Nov 18-SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table-Rapid City Post 22, 12pm
- Nov 18– SDAL Riders Chapter 20 Pancake Feed to benefit Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Center, Pierre Post 8, 7-11am
- Nov 20 VAVS Committee Meeting, via MS Teams, 1pm
- Nov 21 SDAL Foundation Meeting, via MS Teams, 9:30am
- Nov 21 Finance Commission Working Group, Dept HQ, 10am
- Nov 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday, **HQ Closed**
- Dec 5 Governor's Budget Address
- Dec 7 Department HQ GI Party, 14 1st AVE SE, Watertown
- Dec 13 Membership Target Date– Pearl Harbor Day 75%
- Dec 14 Depart Holiday Open House, 14 1st AVE SE, Watertown
- Dec 16 Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, Sioux Falls 11am
- Dec 22-26 Christmas Holiday, **HQ Closed**
- Dec 29-Jan 2 New Years Holiday, **HQ Closed**
- 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 National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year due to HQ
- Jan 9 Governor's State of the State Address, State Capitol 1:00 pm
- Jan 10 SD Vets Council Meeting, Pierre Post 8, 2pm
- Jan 10 SDDVA and SD Vets Council Legislative Reception Pierre Post 8, 5:30pm
- Jan 18 Membership Target Date– Mid-Winter 80%
- Jan 20 MidWinter Go-Getter certification due to Depart HQ
- Jan 22 SDAL Day at the Capital
- Jan 22 SDAL Legislative Reception, Pierre Post 8
- Feb 14 Membership Target Date– President's Day 85%
- Feb 16-18 SDAL Mid-Winter Conference, the Lodge at Deadwood

HAT IN THE RING

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

Representing the post-First Impressions

Greetings Legion family!

Story time. From my District Commander days:

I'll never forget the worst Post meeting I went to. There's been a few bad ones, but I definitely remember the worst.

I won't name Post names—we'll call them Post X, but Oi, it's been eight years and I still remember that meeting. There were only a few members in attendance, and one in particular used the meeting as his opportunity to yell at everyone about everything. Didn't matter the topic, he had an opinion, and yours was wrong. Lewd and racist comments were made—it wasn't even my meeting, and I felt compelled to ask the man to be quiet.

It. Was. Awful.

First impressions mean a lot to a Post. I can tell you that had I been a member of Post X, I'd have probably never stepped foot in a Legion meeting again. I often wonder how many potentially active and valuable members never came back.

The business meetings of the American Legion aren't exactly thrilling endeavors, but they don't have to be dreadful either. I've been to my fair share at this point, and have a few tips and observations I'd like to share:

1: Host a meal with your meetings. Preferably before. Why? It's like that Snickers commercial—people aren't themselves when they're hungry. A meal is a great avenue for socializing, bringing the Legion family together, and kicking most attitudes to the curb.

2: Introduce new members. If you haven't seen them at a meeting before, get them to stand up, say their name, branch, MOS and civilian job. Make a connection: "Oh, Rod was Navy too!," "Liz was a linguist!" or "Kevin retired as a carpenter—you guys should talk!"

3: Short meetings are happy meetings. There are a few easy time hacks.

1) If you can send the minutes of the previous meeting out for reading beforehand, entertain a motion to dispense with the reading.

2) Your Treasurer's report should also be in writing, especially if your post has substantial expenses and income throughout the month. Members can look at the numbers every month, and the oral summary can just hit the highlights of big ticket items—not every dollar and cent needs to be read. Be sure to highlight donations though!

3) Speaking of Treasurer's reports, Don't get caught up in minutiae. It's painful to sit through meetings listening to people bicker about \$25 toilet bills. Please remember that your members are giving their precious time to you and The American Legion—let's not squander it with petty arguments. Save those sidebars for outside. Rap that gavel, Commander!



4: Be positive. There's sincerity in the idiom of attracting more with honey than vinegar. Find good news to share at your meetings, whether it's local events that members can attend, benefit information, or bragging rights on how the Legion baseball team is doing. Being a positive place makes it a place people want to be.

I am happy to report that new leadership has taken over Post X, and my most recent visits have been much more welcoming. I can't say I envy the work Commander X and his fellow Post Leadership had to put in to make that transformation happen; a culture change like that certainly didn't happen overnight. Post X did it though, and if you're at all worried about what your first impressions are, you can too.

Pursue Purpose,



Courtney Steffen
Department Commander

THE SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY IS HIRING FOR THE DEPARTMENT SECRETARY.

Qualifications:

Manage the department headquarters while supporting the mission of the organization.

Knowledgeable on non-profit and employee tax forms to ensure that all appropriate state and/or regulatory taxes are filed.

Excellent communication skills, willingness to learn new systems as needed, provide necessary reporting as requested, ability to multi-task and able to work closely with multiple Executives.

Attention to detail, strong organizational and time management skills, work under minimal supervision.

Maintain all monies received at the department headquarters, make deposits, and provide the Treasurer details of deposits.

Maintain record books needed to carry out Department Business.

Proficient in Word and Excel.

Open all mail, answer phone calls, maintain calendar and appointments, make room arrangements, and fill other related job duties.

Attend requested meetings. Provide notice of all meetings, take meeting minutes, and act as Secretary of the Executive Committee.

Ability to work weekends and have dependable transportation.

Department Secretary position is 40 hours a week.

High School diploma, 3 years experience preferred.

Closing date December 15, 2023, or until filled.

Please submit a cover letter and resume with references to: **South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary, PO Box 529, Clear Lake, SD 57226 or southdakotaala@gmail.com**

Please note: The Department of South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters is determined through negotiations with the successful candidate.

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS G.I. PARTY!

The Department Headquarters is looking for volunteers to assist on Dec 7th from 8am-4pm in rearranging office space, cleaning clutter and painting (14 1st AVE SE, Watertown.) If you are interested in assisting please contact the Adjutant at **605-886-2870 or adjutant@sdlegion.org**.

DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSE FOR THE HOLIDAY

The Department Headquarters will host an Open House for the Holidays on December 14th from 12-4pm in the HQ Office (14 1st AVE SE, Watertown.) All available are welcome to attend there will be hot cider & coco, eggnog and snacks. Prizes will be given for the best ugly sweater, and holiday costume with drawings for special Department door prizes.

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

The American Legion is your voice in Washington and Pierre for Veteran and Military related legislation. 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.

www.votervoices.net/AmericanLegion/Campaigns

If you have a concern about South Dakota Veteran or Military issues; the Adjutant wants to hear from you, contact him at **adjutant@sdlegion.org** or call the office at **605-886-2870**.

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.

NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER/EMT OF THE YEAR (NFY).

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a firefighter. The Department winner is submitted to compete at the National level. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations should be submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st.

DEPARTMENT EMT OF THE YEAR.

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a Emergency Medical Technician. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations should be submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st.

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR (NLEOY).

This award recognizes the professionalism and dedication of a law enforcement officer. The Department winner is submitted to compete at the National level. Nomination packages cover the time period of 1 July to 30 June. Nominations are submitted directly to Department Headquarters by December 31st.

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, 16 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.

2028 DEPT CONVENTION & MIDWINTER

Bids for the 2028 MidWinter are being accepted, at this time only one bid has been submitted from Chamberlain 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 MidWinter	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 MidWinter	TBD	Feb 16-18

DISTRICT SPRING MEETINGS 2024

The following dates will be the Spring District Meetings. Watch future Up To Now for more details:
 District 5: Saturday, March 2, 2024
 District 4: Sunday, March 3, 2024, Groton Post , Time TBD
 District 3: Saturday, March 16, 2024
 District 6: Sunday, March 17, 2024
 District 8: Saturday, April 6, 2024
 District 7: Sunday, April 7, 2024
 District 1: Saturday, April 13, 2024
 District 2: Sunday, April 14, 2024

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MAKES APPOINTMENTS

Commander Steffen has made the following appointments to the Athletic Commission:
 Chairman Lyle Tolsma of Rapid City
 Commissioner Marv Tisdall (to serve out Van Delist term)
 Commissioner Travis Kurth (SAL) of Groton

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

2024 SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION COLLEGE

The 2024 South Dakota American Legion College will be April

27th & 28th in Chamberlain, SD. Class size is limited to ten (10). Applications can be found at <https://www.sdlegion.org/department-training-tools/>

AMERICAN LEGION BASIC TRAINING COURSE

Have you completed the Basic Training Course? The course covers five topics: history and organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism; and Children & Youth. Each topic offers ways in which ily members can advance the organization’s values and services in their local communities. Graduates can download and print a certificate of completion and order a Basic Training Graduate pin from Emblem Sales. Take the course online at www.legion.org/training.

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.

SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Department awarded four students educational scholarships for the 2023-24 academic year. Recipients are Samantha Peppel of Chamberlain, Allison Gross of Brookings, Ela Petersen of Pierre, and Mayor Matthies of Sioux Falls. Congratulations to all students. Information and applications can be found at www.sdlegion.org/scholarship-information/

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 Department HQ. 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.

REMINDER TO ALL AMERICAN LEGION POSTS TO FILE IRS FORM 990

Federal tax regulations require every Post to file IRS form 990. This must be filled out by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your organizations 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.* 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 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 Witten #167

District 4: ALL Complete

District 5: ALL Complete

District 6:

Virgil #268

District 7:

Flandreau #70 Baltic #175 Sioux Falls Post #911

District 8:

Lake Andes #10 Parker #30

NATIONAL COMMANDER 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 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

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

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 National Headquarters.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN MESSAGE

Fall meetings are over, thank you to all the Posts that hosted the meetings. Being my first time going to all the meetings to say the least it was a great experience, one that I will remember for a long time. It is time now to move forward and concentrate on reaching our goal of **16,261**.

The Membership total as of 0700 hours November 1, 2023, is 11,500.

I ask for your help to reach 12,196 by Veterans Day so we can stay ahead of the game and not be scrambling at the end. If we as a team can reach all our target dates, there is up to \$2000 to be awarded to the Department.

The Department has a new Incentive Plan for this current year. Starting November 10 there is a contest for recruiting new members. There is also a program for the individual posts. Both contests have a cash prize. The details will be sent to each Post Adjutant along with this month’s Up to Now.

Those of you that have renewed your membership, thank you very much. If you have not paid your 2024 dues, may I ask you to do so, your membership will expire December 31, 2023. As our Commander has said, traveling to District meetings and posts the legion is not about membership it is about Purpose. Membership is our objective that makes the Legion strong and a voice in Congress and at the State Legislature when it comes to asking for benefits so the Legion can continue to “Pursue Purpose”.

Until next I wish you and your families a very blessed and happy Thanksgiving. Thank you all for your do for the American Legion
-Bill



The American Legion Department of South Dakota 2023-2024 Special Membership Incentives

Post size categories:

Category 1: 15-26

Category 2: 27-46

Category 3: 47-89

Category 4: 90 plus

Individual Recruiter Award (2nd Half of the Year)

A Legionnaire who recruits a new 2024 member starting November 10th will have their name entered into a drawing. A winner from each of the above categories will be selected and will receive a \$50 check. The recruiter's name will be entered into the drawing one time for each new member recruited. The Post Adjutant or Membership Chairman are responsible for reporting the names of the recruiters along with the name of the new member to Department Headquarters for all new members recruited. If memberships and recruiters' names are not forwarded by Friday, June 14th, 2024, the recruiter's name will not be in the drawing. Mail or email the name of the recruiter and name of the new member to:

The American Legion Department of South Dakota
Adjutant
PO Box 67
Watertown, SD 57201
or
Adjutant@sdlegion.org

Post Membership Award

Posts that meet the following criteria will be put into a drawing for a \$200 award to be drawn at the Department Convention. Posts must meet the minimum membership requirement of 15 to enter the drawing. One winner will be selected from each of the above membership categories. Posts will only be entered one time when they meet all the criteria and will be entered one (1) additional time for every 1% over their 100% membership goal.

1. Meet or exceed 85% of membership goal by Mid-Winter.
2. Meet or exceed 100% of membership goal by the Friday June 14, 2024.
3. Meet or exceed 90% retention by Friday June 14, 2024.
4. Submit on time their Post Data Report, Consolidated Post Report and Post Officer Certification.

The American Legion

Department of South Dakota



November 1, 2023

PLEASE READ AT YOUR NEXT POST MEETING

Dear Fellow Legionnaires:

The South Dakota American Legion Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services Committee (VAVS) wants to remind you of our mission and ask for your support.

First, there is always room for volunteers from your Post to get involved in the VAVS program through patient visitations at your nearest VA facility. There is also need for "Home Service Volunteers" to call on veteran patients who have been discharged from the VA and are recuperating at home. It's easy to get started, just contact the Chief of Voluntary Service at your nearest VA Hospital.

Secondly, there is always need for financial contributions to help with canteen chit books and the like for indigent patients. Many Posts have established a practice of contributing memorials to deceased members to the VAVS Fund, while others make an annual sizable donation. If your Post was one of the contributors, on behalf of the VAVS Committee, I thank you sincerely and hope you will keep up the practice.

If your Post missed the chance to be a part of this great program, I hope you will bring it up at the next Post meeting and initiate the action to include your Post in the list of contributors. Any and all contributions are needed and appreciated. They do make an actual difference especially to those in the VA Hospitals. Here's a chance for your Post to help fellow veterans – who knows, someone from your Post might even be on the receiving end!

Won't you please help our VAVS Program either by your time for voluntary service or monetarily? Contributions can be sent to State Headquarters, PO Box 67, Watertown, SD 57201 earmarked for "VAVS".

We will again have a **COLLECTION FOR POPCORN** at the Midwinter Conference in Deadwood, on February 17th, 2024. Donations to the popcorn fund can be made to State Headquarters at any time during the year. The VA facilities and the State Veterans Home can purchase popcorn from South Dakota suppliers much cheaper than Posts can buy it, and the transportation problem is eliminated. Consequently, the VAVS Committee prefers monetary donations earmarked "popcorn" to be brought to Watertown and turned in for the project.

Sincerely,

Charemon Dunham, Chairman
VAVS Committee
S.D. American Legion

The American Legion

Department of South Dakota



November 1, 2023

PLEASE READ AT YOUR NEXT POST MEETING

Dear Fellow Legionnaires:

It is once again time to think of holiday activities and the Christmas Season for veterans cared for at the VA Medical Centers in South Dakota.

These activities are sponsored through donations, which go toward the purchase of gifts and providing of activities and programs for veterans during holidays and throughout the year.

These donations are put in the Veterans' Holidays and Special Projects Fund. The majority of this fund is used to provide holiday activities for veterans. Any excess will be used to fund special activities, programs and projects. In this way, your donation will provide a gift of enjoyment all year long.

As Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Representatives for our organization, we would like to encourage you to help us make the holidays as pleasant as possible for our veterans.

If you would like to make a donation for this very worthwhile purpose, you can do so by sending a check along with directions as to how you would like to have your donation distributed, to Department Headquarters in Watertown.

In person Christmas parties are scheduled as follows but are subject to change:

Human Services at Yankton – December 5th, 5:30

Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home Hot Springs - December 8th, time TBD

Hot Springs VA Medical Center - December 9th, time TBD

Ft. Meade VA Medical Center - December 10th, time TBD

Sioux Falls VA Medical Center - December 12th, 1:00 p.m.

As you know, the hospital is a poor substitute for home and family during the holidays, but if we all work together, we can make them more pleasant for veterans who must be hospitalized during the holiday season.

Sincerely,

Your American Legion VAVS Hospital Representatives

VA MEDICAL CENTER
Voluntary Service (135)
PO Box 5046
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

VA MEDICAL CENTER
Voluntary Services
500 North 5th St.
Hot Springs, SD 57747

VA MEDICAL CENTER
Voluntary Services
113 Comanche Rd.
Fort Meade, SD 57741

MICHAEL J. FITZMAURICE
STATE VETERANS HOME
Voluntary Services
2500 Minnekahta Ave.
Hot Springs, SD 57747

SOUTH DAKOTA AMERICAN LEGION
PO Box 67
Watertown, SD. 57201