

General Orders

AUGUST 2025



AUDIT REPORTS

QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

Post Commanders, please ensure the Audits are turned in to the Department office. A Commander is not allowed to appoint an acting Trustee to fill in for a Trustee who is not present to sign an Audit.

QUARTERMASTER BONDS

BONDING

Quartermasters are required per Section 703, page 39 of the Bylaws to be bonded. The current bonds expire August 31, 2024. The rates are \$4.50 for \$3,000 to \$25,000, \$3.50 for \$26,000 to \$250,000, \$3.00 for \$251,000 to \$500,000, \$2.75 for \$501,000 to \$600,00 per thousand.

STATE FAIR

SD STATE FAIR

The Department VFW will have their own tent, table, and recruiting efforts at the State Fair in the same space as last year. If you would like to volunteer, contact Judge Advocate, Dale Greenfield at 605-350-2319



COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORTING

The online website for the South Dakota Dashboard is up and running. All community service is to be reported online. Log in to www.vfwsd.org > Login > Members Only > Member ID# = Member number and Password = Last Name with first letter capitalized.

If you have any problems or need help, please contact Anna Arnold at the Department office 605-332-7441.

VOD / PP

Commanders, please make sure you have appointed a Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen for the 2024-2025 Command Year. We will be using the Scholar's App website for the students and chairpersons from the Post all the way to National. The Department Chairperson is Margaret & Dale Greenfield

www.vfwsd.org



FALL COUNCIL / HOMECOMING

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

Fall Council is scheduled for October 3-5, 2025, at the Alliance Center in Sioux Falls, SD. The room rates are between \$110 per night. Please make your reservation as soon as possible.

The registration form will be in the back of these General Orders. You can also find them online at www.vfwsd.org > News > Fall Council Registration 2025

www.vfwsd.org

Post Chaplains are reminded to forward deceased names to Post Quartermasters for proper reporting online to National.

BIG TEN CONFERENCE

BIG TEN CONFERENCE

Members are reminded that the Big Ten Conference will be held in Bettendorf, IA October 17-19, 2025. You are encouraged and welcomed to attend.

www.vfwsd.org

Baseball Fans! Check out the SD VFW Baseball Website or Department Facebook Event Page for upcoming Tournaments!

District Fall Meetings

- District 1 - September 21, 2025 at 1 pm in Brandon - Commander Christensen
- District 4 - October 12, 2025 at 2 pm in Watertown - SVC VandenHoek
- District 6 - September 28, 2025 at 1 pm in Redfield - Commander Christensen
- District 7 - October 12, 2025 at 2 pm in Chamberlain - JVC Greenfield
- District 10 - September 7, 2025 Picnic at 1 pm, Meeting at 2 pm, bring a dish to share - Commander Christensen

ATTENTION: IF YOU WOULD LIKE A HARD COPY OF THE NATIONAL BYLAWS THAT ARE BEING PRINTED RIGHT NOW, PLEASE CONTACT ANNA AT THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE 605-332-7441 OR ANNA@VFWDEPTSD.COM

****We will order no more than 1 copy per Post****

Membership Hot Tip: When looking at MemStats for your records, the "Prior Year" column is how many members your Post or District had on June 30, 2024. That is the amount of people you need to have on your Roster to have 100% on June 30, 2025.



OFFICIAL:



Anna Arnold

Quartermaster/ Adjutant
Department of South Dakota
Veterans of Foreign Wars

BY ORDER OF:

**Dr. Martin
Christensen**

Commander
Department of South Dakota
Veterans of Foreign Wars



General Orders – August 2025

Doc Marty Christensen, Commander SD Dept VFW

1. Completed first month of command. I visited all 47 Posts and all 5 Districts in South Dakota. I traveled over 6,000 miles in one month. Many of the Posts are making great progress with ongoing businesses, others are maintaining with a meeting place, and some are in need of our help. I will work with the District Commanders and the Posts that need help.
2. We purchased a 2025 Chrysler Pacifica van. It is licensed, insured and has a maintenance plan. We replaced Weather Tech mats inside. Make-It-Mine will place the decals on the vehicle in August that the COA and National VFW approved.
3. Membership – each Post required to do a recruiting event each quarter and submit an After Action Report to Anna. Goal is 101% for All-State and All-American. Dale Greenfield is in charge of membership this year.
4. Sturgis Rally is 1-7 August. Sign up to help with recruiting is online with website on July General Orders. I plan to be there every day except Tuesday.
5. I will be attending National VFW Convention in Columbus, Ohio August 9-14. I look forward to seeing all those who are in attendance. I will set up a group text on my arrival.
6. Corn Palace week in Mitchell is 20-24 August with Bingo, raffles, recruiting for VFW and District 7, Auxiliary and other Veterans Organizations.
7. The State Fair begins August 28, which is Veterans Day at the Fair. The Chet Sorenson award will be presented. Free admission on August 28 for Veterans. Dale Greenfield is the POC in organizing the VFW booth and signing up volunteers.
8. Fall District meetings:
 - a. District 1
 - i. 9/21/2025 in Brandon at 1pm
 - b. District 4
 - i. 10/12/2-25 in Watertown at 2pm
 - c. District 6
 - i. 9/28/2025 in Redfield at 1pm
 - d. District 7
 - i. 10/12/2025 in Chamberlain at 2pm
 - e. District 10
 - i. 9/7/2025 at Sturgis Memorial Park – Picnic at 1pm (bring a dish), Meeting at 2pmI will attend and inspect Districts 1, 6 and 10 meetings. Rick VandenHoek will attend and inspect District 4 and Dale Greenfield will attend and inspect District 7.

V/R

Martin Christensen, Commander
SD Dept VFW

General Orders August 2025
Sr Vice Commander

Summer has almost past us by already. Schools will be starting soon and the weather will start to cool down. This also gives of opportunity to get the VFW name out in our communities. We need to stay engaged to support our veterans.

I think every post does a good job taking care of the veterans in their own community. There are 47 Posts in the state but many more communities than that. We need to be engaged in those communities also to ensure we are helping all veterans. There is lots of missed opportunities to get our name out there. I challenge every post to get to a surrounding community and get involved with their school, community event, or county event.

I am looking forward to head out to Columbus, OH shortly for the National Convention. I am hoping to learn more exciting things I can bring back to our department. I am also looking forward to getting back together with our Sr. Vice Commander class and catch up. Lots of things are learned working with other posts and departments.

Let's make sure we are getting all our reports in and donations taken care of. It is never to soon in the year to make a difference. Let's work together to make this a great year. I am always available to listen to your ideas and assist as I can at any level.

Rick Vanden Hoek
Sr. Vice Commander

General Orders August 2025

Junior Vice Commander

I hope all posts are working on recruiting new members, talking to annual members about converting to life membership. We need to conduct a recruiting event at least quarterly and submit an AAR after the event. The goal for membership is 101% based on post membership as of 30 June 2025. Example if your post had 160 members as of 30 June, 101% would be 162 members.

Make sure that you get the flyers out for Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy. The deadline for submission on Scholars Application is 31 October 2025. The program is accepting essays now. If you need help, feel free to contact me. It would be great also to have your judges identified and loaded by 31 October.

I know that we all do things in and for our communities. Make sure you do your community service entries on the state dashboard.

Dale Greenfield

Junior Vice Commander

Message from the State Surgeon – South Dakota VFW

Comrades,

Thank you for the honor of serving as your State Surgeon. I remain committed to keeping you informed on health updates and key developments that affect our veterans.

On a positive note, the VA claims backlog has now dropped below 200,000 — the lowest it has been since 2023. While still too high, this marks real progress in getting veterans the care and benefits they've earned.

Additionally, I want to bring your attention to the **Major Richard Star Act**, which has been filed as an amendment to the annual defense bill. This critical legislation would finally provide full benefits to combat-injured veterans who were forced to retire early. I urge you to contact your congressional representatives and ask them to support this important measure. Your voice makes a difference.

In the months ahead, I'll continue sharing updates on veteran health issues, VA programs, and wellness resources. Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's a topic you'd like covered.

Yours in comradeship,

Dan Klimisch

State Surgeon

VFW – Department of South Dakota

General Orders, August 2025

Doc and I have just finished meeting with all of the Posts in District 7. I am pleased to see them all doing as well as they are, and that they have plans to overcome any shortfalls they currently see or are anticipating. During our conversations, we emphasized communication, recruitment, reporting, and any specific help needed by the Posts.

District 7's recruitment efforts are in full swing by attending multiple community events since the Department Convention. It is great to see our amazing Auxiliary members in attendance with the Posts at every event. I have been able to attend events in Mitchell, Plankinton, Chamberlain, Winner, and Parkston. The Posts and Auxiliaries have a handful of new members going through the acceptance process. Every Post is already on the path to success in their efforts to retain their annual members, replace their lost members, and recruit new, active members.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Sturgis Rally, National Convention, and State Fair. Enjoy the rest of the summer break before schools start back up and please remember to report everything to the Dashboard.

V/R

Brent Jones

Commander

District 7, Dept. SD VFW

Two Veterans Discover at National Home That They Had Met Once Before... Over There

Brian Daniels, Community Development and Alumni Engagement Manager for the National Home was sharing his story at the Jr. Vice Commanders Orientation held annually at the National Home.

Marty Christiansen, then Jr. Vice Commander from South Dakota Post 2750, listened to Daniels tell the tragic story about him and four men in his unit getting blown up in Iraq while traveling in a Humvee. All died except Brian, whose right leg was hanging by a single tendon at the knee.

"It was November 2005, and I was transported to Balad north of Baghdad to the evacuation hospital to receive a blood transfusion," Daniels said.

A memory sparked in Christiansen, who knew he was at that evacuation hospital at that same time.

Colonel Martin Christiansen, M.D., an Army Reserve surgeon, served a one-year tour of duty at that hospital and had a comforting ritual that he performed on every injured soldier who came in. He would place his hand on their forehead and tell them, "We're going to get through this."

"When I was transported to the hospital in Balad, a doctor put his hand on my forehead and said, 'We're going to get through this, buddy,'" recalled Daniels, who said it helped calm him despite the intense pain he was in and the moaning from other injured soldiers all around him.



"They got through this!" Marty (left) and Brian reunite at the VFW National Home.

"When Brian shared his story, I remembered him because his leg fell off the table," said Christiansen, who explained that he assisted in surgery to stabilize Daniels, who was then airlifted to Germany.

It was an emotional moment when Daniels told his story, and Christiansen told him that they had met before.

"I hugged him and had to interrupt the program to go on stage and tell everyone that this man helped save my life," explained Daniels.

"It felt really good to know that we had made a difference. It was closure," said Christiansen, who retired from the Army Reserve in 2007 after 33 years.

Now, the two continue to work for their fellow veterans, Daniels through the VFW National Home and Christiansen through his local VFW post.

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Did you know...

A 24-pound mixed terrier, Sinbad, was smuggled aboard the cutter Campbell in a liberty bag. He interrupted roll call the next morning by insisting very loudly that he was present.



VETERANS STAND DOWN

Friday Sept. 19th, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

SD Military Heritage Alliance

1600 W. Russell St.

Sioux Falls, SD

TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE

**Shuttle service will be available from
8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. from the following locations:**

- **Volunteers of America Dakotas (VOA) Veteran Services Center
@ 14th & Cliff**
- **Sioux Falls VA Health Care System on 22nd and Western**
- **Bishop Dudley Hospitality House**
- **Union Gospel Mission**

**On-the-spot help including clothing,
community housing referrals, medical & dental screening,
readjustment counseling, Women Veteran services and much more!**

Brunch will be served from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

For more information call: (605)-336-3230 x 6135

Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars & Auxiliary



Fall Council

SD Military Heritage Alliance Center in Sioux Falls
1600 W Russell St, Sioux Falls, SD 57104

 **October 3–5, 2025**



Registration Fee: \$105 (Includes Friday & Saturday breaks, Saturday lunch, banquet, and band)

After September 3, 2025, registration price will be \$130

Banquet Only Ticket: \$40

Sheraton Sioux Falls & Convention Center

Room Rate: **\$110/night**

Reserve your room online:

 [Click here to book](https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1751320909249&key=GRP&app=resvlink) or go to <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1751320909249&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

Or Call 605-331-0100

Name: _____ **Title:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

VFW or Auxiliary: ☐ VFW ☐ Auxiliary **Post Number:** _____

Payment Options

Make checks payable to:

Department of South Dakota VFW
1600 W Russell St, Ste 135
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Use QR Code or Pay online:

<https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/department-of-south-dakota-vfw-and-auxiliary-fall-council>



☒ **Return this form and payment by mail or email by September 20, 2025** to confirm your registration.

Questions? Contact us at  anna@vfwdeptsd.com or  (605) 332-7441



FALL COUNCIL HOMECOMING

Alliance Center

1600 West Russell, Sioux Falls SD 57104 605-271-1582

October 3-5, 2025

"Strength Through Unity"

Friday October 3

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

3:00-5:00 pm

5:00-10:00 pm

Early registration

Skills Lab- Lonny Potts, Free Gun Range (BYOG – Bring your Own GUNS, pay for target and ammo only)
VFW Committee Meetings (Audit, Budget, Membership & Publications Committees) Assigned Meeting Room
Hospitality Social (Alliance Center 2nd floor Cash Bar)

Saturday October 4

8:00-8:15 am

8:20-9:00 am

9:00-9:50 am

9:50-10:00 am

10:00-10:30 am

10:30 am-11:30 am

11:30-1:00 pm

11:30-1:00 pm

1:00-2:00 pm

2:00-3:00 pm

3:00-3:15 pm

3:15-3:45 pm

3:45-4:00 pm

5:00-5:30 pm

5:30-7:30 pm

7:30-10:30

Registration

Opening Remarks – Main Room (Family Fun Center, 2nd floor)
Commanders Updates-CDR Christensen
Quartermaster Training- Trustee, District CDR-QM Arnold, Inspector Ochsner
Break (snack included in Hallway)

VOD/PP Training – Dale & Margaret Greenfield (Auxiliary will be sitting in)

Past Commanders/Current & Past District Commanders Luncheon (In Bunker)

Lunch for all registered members (On main floor with buffet, must have name-badges)

Membership & Recruiting Events Training-JVC -Greenfield & SRC-VandenHoek & CDR Christensen

VSO Training-Dave Huntimer

Break

District Commanders, Judge Advocate, Surgeon

Closing Remarks-CDR Christensen

Social Hour (cash bar)

Banquet – (Sports Jerseys) Hospitality Social (Alliance Center 2nd Floor Cash Bar)

Nolan Clark Band (All Veterans Service Organizations invited)

Sunday October 5

9:00-11:00 am

VFW Council of Administration

