

General Orders

DECEMBER 2025



PEARL HARBOR DAY FLY FLAGS AT HALF STAFF

December 7th is National Pearl Harbor Day. All Posts should fly their flag at half-staff from sunrise to sunset.



VETERANS DAY REPORTS VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day Reports are due. To send in your reports, please utilize the State Dashboard for reporting. If you need help, please contact Anna at the Department office 605-332-7441.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The Department Legislative Conference, Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year Award winners is set for January 25 & 26, 2026 at the AmericInn in Pierre. The registration form is attached at the end of the General Orders.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

From the Department Officers

🎄 Merry Christmas 🎄

To our cherished Comrades, families, and friends,
As we gather in the spirit of this beautiful season, we send our warmest wishes for a Christmas filled with peace, joy, and the comfort of those you hold dear.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to every Veteran who has answered the call to serve. Your courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to our nation will never be taken for granted. Because of you, we enjoy the freedoms and blessings we hold so dear today.

Membership

Membership efforts in December should be concentrated on contacting ALL 2025 members who are not current on their membership dues. Take this opportunity to lend a caring ear to our Veterans during this Christmas season. Check on our brothers and sisters in arms. This can be a very tough time!

Your Adjutant should be able to view this information in OMS. If you need any assistance, please contact Anna at the Department office at 605-332-7441 or anna@vfwdeptsd.com for more information.



DEPARTMENT OFFICE CLOSED

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Department office recognizes the same Holiday schedules as the National VFW offices.

The Department office will be closed Wednesday, December 24, 2025, through Friday, January 2, 2026. Employees will return on Monday, January 5, 2026.

If you would like to include something in the General Orders, please have your submission to the Department office no later than the 25th of each month. Send submission via Microsoft word document to anna@vfwdeptsd.com.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

DECEMBER 13

Please help us remember, honor, and teach on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 11:00 am by sponsoring a wreath, volunteering, or inviting friends to help.

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, in partnership with Midwest Honor Flight and Wreaths Across America, will host a wreath-laying ceremony on Saturday, December 13, 2025. The event will begin at 11:00 am (CT) at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery Committal Shelter, located at 25965 477th Avenue in Sioux Falls.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND IN YOUR RAFFLE STUBS AND MONEY FROM THE COMMANDER RAFFLE!

dale.greenfield@yahoo.comdale.greenfield@yahoo.comwepsman69@gmail.com

Mid-Winter District Meetings

District 1 - December 14, 2025, at 1 pm in Sioux Falls, SVC VandenHoek, or Surgeon Klimisch

District 4 - January 5, 2026, at 2 pm, in Watertown, Commander Christiansen

District 6 - February 1, 2026, at 1 pm, Zoom, JVC Greenfield

District 7 - February 1, 2026, at 2 pm, Winner, Commander Christiansen

District 10 - January 11, 2026, at 2 pm Rapid City, JA Pyka

The license plate stickers are still for sale! If you would like to purchase a logo, please contact Anna at the Department office. Email anna@vfwdeptsd.com or 605-332-7441. Each sticker is \$10.00.

This is what the sticker looks like:



Sticker goes here

\$10.00 per sticker

Send check to Department office at:
1600 W Russell St, Ste 135
Sioux Falls, SD 57045



****Would make a great Stocking Stuffer for Christmas****
*****Also available for motorcycles*****

Proposed Amendments to the Department Bylaws should be submitted to Department Headquarters not later than 10 January 2026 as a suggestion to allow the Resolutions & Bylaws Committee ample time to review prior to the Legislative Conference. These Proposals can be discussed at the Legislative Conference and voted on during the State Convention. Any Amendment Proposal should be in the proper format to include Article, Section and the reason and rationale for the proposal.



OFFICIAL:



Anna Arnold

Quartermaster / Adjutant
Department of South Dakota
VFW

BY ORDER OF:

Dr. Martin Christensen

Commander
Department of South Dakota
VFW



General Orders – Dec 2025

Doc Marty Christensen, Commander SD Dept VFW

1. Membership – goal is 101%. Dept of SD is currently at 93.68%. We need another 508 members, so be sure to look at those members who have not paid and get them to pay for this year. Better yet, get them to move to lifetime memberships. Dale Greenfield has been doing a good job in this area. If you have any questions, please contact him.
2. Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen – Judging has gone to the Districts To be All State and All-American Posts; you need at least 1 of each. The post should be written on National Dashboard for PP, VOD, & Teacher of year. Dale and Margaret Greenfield have the lead on this program.
3. November was a busy month for me. I attended the VFW Veterans Hunt in Aberdeen and hunted with National Jr Vice Glen Umberger Jr. I visited and participated in Veterans Day parade in Rapid city. We recruited one new annual & 2 legacy members. We did raffles at County Fair and recruited 3 new members along with 1 Auxiliary member. Post 2750 did a Pancake feed and helped send off the 665 Maintenance Company in Mitchell as they were deployed. We visited the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, MI. We will be presenting multiple COA for our Dept to sponsor a home. I attended South Dakota Veteran Council meeting in Sioux Falls and Round Table discussions in Sioux Falls & Watertown.
4. Planning Committees and I are working on National Home Sponsor, Black hills National Cemetery Memorial Day, and 2026 VFW State Convention in Mitchell
5. Midwinter District meeting
 - a. District 1 – 12/7/2025 Yankton – Rick or Dan
 - b. District 4 – 1/4/2026 at 2pm in Watertown - Marty
 - c. District 6 – 2/1/2026 at 1pm via ZOOM - Dale
 - d. District 7 – 2/1/2026 at 2pm in Winner - Marty
 - e. District 10 – 1/11/2026 at 2pm in Rapid City – Kat
6. We accomplished another goal for our command year for fundraising Helping with Horsepower. With the help of the Sam Tronnes Memorial Foundation, we raised \$15,000 to help them with a new building. Helping With Horsepower is an organization that assists Veterans with PTSD, depression and physical disabilities.
7. Legislative conference is scheduled for 25-26 Jan 2026. I hope to see as many members as possible. This is one area we can get involved in and really help our Veterans. You should make contact and plan to visit your home district elected officials on Monday morning, January 26, 2026.
8. Please be sure to bring non-perishable items to the Legislative Conference. We are working with the VFW Auxiliary to stock the food pantry in Rapid City.

V/R

Martin Christensen, Commander
SD Dept VFW

December General Orders
Senior Vice Commander

Happy December. Winter is here and it looks like it is going to stay for a while. I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving.

November has been a busy month. We had lots of events at the post along with Department events. I attended the Bridges dedication ceremony at the Alliance on Veteran's Day. Six Bridges were dedicated to WWII deceased. It was a very good ceremony with addresses from Governor Rhoden and MG Morrell, SDNG TAG. I also attended the Veteran's Council Meeting and Legislative round table in Sioux Falls. This was very informative and a great chance to get in front of local legislators and talk about our priorities.

With the Holiday season among us, it is time to remember the Veterans that struggle this time of year. It is time we reached out and did wellness checks on our members. A quick text or call to let them know they are not forgotten goes a long way. Our purpose as the VFW is to take care of our veterans. I know many posts have events for veterans this time of year. Let's do our best to support these efforts. It is also time to get out in the community to get their support for our veterans this time of year.

It seems crazy that this year is ending and almost halfway through the command year. Let's continue our efforts in recruiting and taking care of our members. The big push this year and next will be to retain members. Once we get a new member, we need to focus on keeping them. That is a big struggle nationwide. Let's reach out to expired members and see what we can do to get them back.

In closing, I want to thank you for another great year. I will continue to do my best for you. Please reach out if there is anything you need or ideas to make us better. I want our VFW to be a strong and unified entity when it comes to taking care of our veterans. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rick Vanden Hoek
Sr. Vice

December 2025

State JR Vice

We are currently at approximately 94% of membership and need to retain or recruit almost 500 members to reach our 101% goal. We are almost halfway through our VFW year. We need to continue to recruit new members and retain our current continuous members. We will get there together.

This year we received 1080 applications for Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy on scholars app. All the Posts that had entries have been judged and submitted forward to District. The Districts have until 5 December to get judging completed and promoted to state. The winners at the State level will be announced at the Legislative Conference on 25 January 2026.

We received 14 teachers of the year applications this year. The winners will also be announced at the Legislative Conference on 25 January 2026.

I wanted to thank everyone for what you do for this organization. It is our VFW. Wishing everyone happy holidays.

I have military buddies all over the United States. This is also the time of the year that I like to do buddy checks. Check on our family.

Dale Greenfield

State Junior Vice Commander

Hello again, Comrades,

This past month has been a busy one at my home post in Rapid City. We began with another great Veterans Day Parade and Luncheon, where we were honored to have our Department Commander and President in attendance. Shortly after, we held our annual *Boots on the Ground* event, where we had the privilege of assisting more than 80 Veterans and their families with winter clothing and a hot meal.

The following Saturday, we hosted Turkey Bingo and were able to give out over 40 turkeys. For Thanksgiving, our post served dinner—with all the trimmings—to more than 130 people. These three events are made possible through the Still Serving Grant from the VFW Foundation, which reimburses us up to \$1,500 of our expenses. This grant is open to all posts and auxiliaries, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of it.

As we move into December, please remember to reach out to your members and check that they have everything they need. The holiday season is, unfortunately, one of the times when suicide rates are at their highest, and a simple call or visit can make a real difference.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season, and I can't wait to see you all in Pierre in January.

Kat Pyka

Judge Advocate

(719)661-9738

adj@vfw1273.org

Comrades,

As we enter the holiday season, I encourage all of us to take a moment and give thanks for the privilege of living in this great nation and for the honor of being Americans. Our service has given us a unique appreciation for the freedoms we enjoy, and this time of year is a fitting reminder of just how fortunate we are.

Let us also keep in our thoughts the men and women currently serving overseas. Many will spend the holidays far from family, friends, and the country they love. A prayer, a message, or simply keeping them in our hearts goes a long way.

Closer to home, please remember that many fellow veterans in our communities are homebound, living in nursing homes, or spending the holidays alone. A simple invitation to a post-event, a phone call, or even a shared cup of coffee can make an enormous difference. Small gestures remind them that they are not forgotten and remain part of our veteran family.

Post 791 will be delivering gift bags to local shut-in veterans and those in nursing homes this season, and I encourage other Posts to consider similar acts of kindness.

Thank you for continuing to live the values of service, compassion, and comradeship.

Yours in Comradeship,

Dan Klimisch

Post 791

State Surgeon,

VFW Department of South Dakota

General Orders, December 2025

“Winter is coming” or it has already arrived for some of us.

The Dashboard is already showing a decrease in our reporting. Let’s not all shelter in place for the winter just yet. Please be sure to report all the hard work your Post members continue to put forth. Remember that reporting our Community Service will quantify our efforts to our Legislators. This is an important time of the year for them to have our best interests in mind during the upcoming voting period.

We had a lot of great Veteran’s Day programs and celebrations. It was amazing to see all of the student participation at the school programs that I attended. Thank you again to the Armour Post for inviting me to speak at your program and for allowing me the opportunity to meet some of your local community members.

We just finished our District level Patriot’s Pen and Voice of Democracy judging and elevated a couple great candidates to win the Department level. Thank you to all of our VFW and Auxiliary members that completed the judging process.

District 7’s membership numbers are still on track with the original District Membership Recruitment Plan turned in at the beginning of the year. We have 7 of our 12 Posts at or above 100%, and the District is just over 99%. We can meet our goal of 100% by the new year and will be postured for success of meeting the All-American requirement this coming spring. Great job by the Lake Andes, Parkston, Plankinton, and Wagner Posts for already meeting the 101% requirement.

I hope you all enjoyed your Thanksgiving and are preparing for Christmas early. Please take the time to check on our fellow Veterans during the holidays. Our mental health tends to get tested during this time of the year. If you find yourself needing help, please reach out to anyone you would feel comfortable talking to. The bottom of the bottle will lie to you.

Thank you all for your time and efforts,
For the Veterans

Brent Jones

Commander

District 7, Dept. SD VFW

VFW & AUX LEGISLATIVE REGISTRATION FORM

January 25 & 26, 2026

AmericInn by Wyndham Fort Pierre
605-223-2358
312 Island Dr.
Pierre, SD 57532



Room Rate - \$129.99/night + tax
*Limited rooms available

****YOU MUST RESERVE YOUR OWN ROOM****

Email:

Telephone Number:

Full Name:

Title:

Guest Name:

ONE REGISTRATION FORM PER PERSON

Register Before January 3, 2026 - \$125

Registration after January 3, 2026 - \$150
(Includes Luncheon meal on Monday and Mixer)
Guest Lunch on Monday - \$40



Make checks payable to: Dept of SD VFW
1600 W Russell St, Ste 135 Sioux Falls, SD 57104

[Click Here to Register](#)



LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE KICKOFF

BUSINESS MEETING LOCATION:

AMERICINN

910 N Deadwood St, Fort Pierre, SD
(605) 223-9451

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

01 BUSINESS MEETINGS

10:00 am
Registration Open

10:00 am
Committee Meetings: Audit, Budget,
Legislative, Membership & Bylaws
Lunch on your own

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Council of Administration Meeting
Khakis & Polos

5:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Social Hour & Soup Contest Supper
American Legion Post #8 – Cash Bar

Where Ideas and People Come to Mix:
Legislative Mixer - Monday Night at the AmericInn

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY PATRIOT'S PEN TEACHER OF THE YEAR

LUNCHEON BANQUET LOCATION:

AMERICINN

312 Island Dr., Pierre, SD
(605) 223-2358



02 MONDAY, JANUARY 25

8:00 am

Winners meet at AmericInn for a tour of the
Capital Building, and meet-and-greet with active
Legislators.
Suit & Tie Attire



8:00 am - 11:30 am

STORM THE CAPITOL: Schedule meetings with
your hometown Legislators.
Push the Legislative Properties for the VFW!!
Suit & Tie Attire



10:30 am

South Dakota National Guard Museum Tour
301 East Dakota Avenue, Pierre, SD – (605) 773-2475
All are welcome

12:00 pm

Luncheon Banquet: VOD, PP, Toy Awards
Meet at AmericInn

Legislative Mixer Tonight - Don't Miss It!

VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

03

LEGISLATIVE MIXER

Monday, January 25

5:30 pm

VFW Legislative Mixer with
Politicians Commences
Business Casual Attire

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Hors d'oeuvres Served
Included with Registration

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Social Bar Available: Members &
Legislators receive 2 drink tickets
Cash Bar

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

For the most updated legislative bills for to:
<https://sdlegislature.gov/>



LEGISLATIVE MIXER LOCATION:

AMERICINN

312 Island Dr., Pierre, SD
(605) 223-2358



LET'S DRIVE
THE MISSION
FORWARD.



HELP KEEP
THE VAN
MOVING!

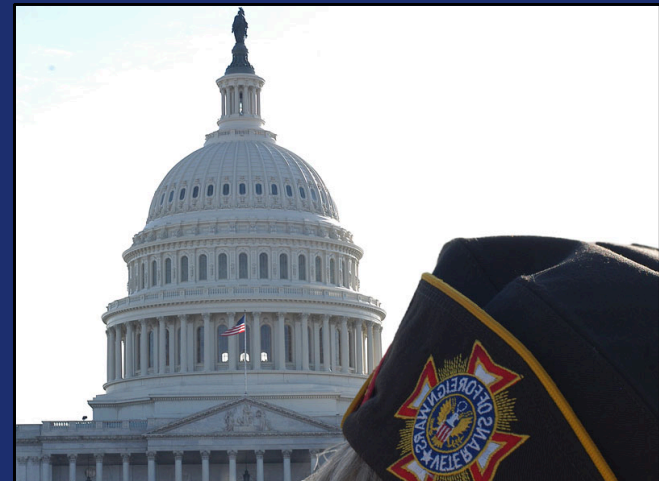


VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE 2026



CONFERENCE AGENDA

SUNDAY
JANUARY 25, 2026
&
MONDAY
JANUARY 26, 2026



DEPARTMENT OF SD VFW AUXILIARY
PRESIDENTS PROJECT

VOC Food Drive

BRING TO FALL
COUNCIL, LEGISLATIVE
MEETING, DISTRICT
MEETINGS AND STATE
CONVENTION

Help Eliminate
Food Insecurities!!

BRING SOME CANS!!

MAKE A MEAL BOX!!

BRING SOME CASH!!

THE CHOICE IS YOURS
AND IT'S ENDLESS!!



DEC 12-14, 2025

19th ANNUAL DAY COUNTY COYOTE HUNT

Roslyn SD

**All money raised supports
South Dakota Military
and their family**

2 Person Team \$60

First Prize \$1,500

Additional cash prizes in 9 categories

**Optional Buy-In for Big
Dog/Little Dog \$15
75% pay back**



Contact Patti at 605-280-0777

**Pre-registration Due by November 11 or
Roslyn FireHall on Dec 12 at 5:30 PM**

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!!

Sponsored by

John M Bliss Post 628 VFW Auxiliary



Bottoms Up!!

Attn: All Coyote Hunters

Day County Coyote Hunt is asking you to help with the VFW Auxiliary assist our Military Babies or Adults.

Please bring ONE package of diapers to Friday night registration. These will be donated to South Dakota Military Families in need of assistance.

**Let 's make this work
for our Military Babies!!**

