

General Orders

SEPTEMBER 2026



FALL CONFERENCE

Meetings are set for September 25-27, 2026 at the Best Western Ramkota in Rapid City. Please reserve your rooms and register as soon as possible. We will start the event with some golfing at the Ellsworth A.B. golf course on Friday the 25th at 8:00am.

POW / MIA DAY

The United States' National POW/MIA Recognition Day is observed across the nation on the 3rd Friday of September each year. September 18th, please take the time to remember those who were POWs and those MIA, as well as their families.

PATRIOT DAY

September 11th is National Patriot Day, and the US Flag is to be flown at half-staff from sunrise until sunset to remember the victims of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Pennsylvania.



BIG TEN CONFERENCE

The Big Ten Conference will be held in Kalamazoo, MI October 15-18, 2026. If you are not already registered and would like to attend, please contact Brent Jones for updated registration information.

VOD / PP / Teachers Award

All entries for Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teachers Awards should be submitted to the Post level no later than October 31st. All questions should be directed to Chairmen, Dale & Margaret Greenfield, dale.greenfield@yahoo.com or 605-350-2319. VOD/PP must use the Scholar's App for entries.



DEPARTMENT AND NATIONAL DUES

MEMBERSHIP DUES

The total sent to the Department is \$10.00 and National is \$21.50. This means, any amount charged at the Post level above \$31.50, is considered the Post Dues.

All Post, District, and Department Officers who have not paid their VFW membership dues for the Command Year are expected to pay their dues immediately, thereby setting a good example for other members.

If you wish to publish something in the General Orders, please have it to Brent by the 25th of every month. Please send in a Microsoft Word document format to brent@vfwdeptsd.com

FALL CONFERENCE REMINDERS

The Department is asking for all Districts and able Posts/members to bring donated Auction items to the Fall Conference. The items will be set up in a silent auction format with a few of the more elegant items possibly auctioned off during the banquet.

Please register immediately. We currently have 44 members registered and do not have anything close to what numbers we will need for catering purposes.

The extended hotel room block will expire soon and you will be asked to pay a higher price. Please call and make your reservations now.

Golf Scramble show time is 8:00am Friday and tee off at 8:30am. Please send Brent names of all participants. This is also open to any sponsors you may have relationships with.

District Fall Meetings – District Commanders, please complete all Post Inspections and be prepared to conduct District Inspections at these meetings.

District 1 – November 1, 2026 at 1:00pm in Beresford

District 4 – October 11, 2026 at 2:00pm in Watertown

District 6 – September 19, 2026 at 1:00pm in Aberdeen

District 7 – October 11, 2026 at 2:00pm in Scotland

District 10 – September 13, 2026 Picnic at 1:00pm, Meeting at 2:00pm, bring side-dish or dessert

All Posts are encouraged to publish a Post publication of some type to be entered into the contest at the end of the Command Year. There are 2 different categories that are judged, Category 1, Publications of 5 or more during the Command Year and Category 2, 4 or less Publications during the Command Year. The POC for this is Allan Ochsner, State Inspector.

DESECRATION OF THE UNITED STATES FLAG – Any member who has knowledge of acts of desecration to the flag of the United States of America is asked to report the same to the State Commander or Department Headquarters.



OFFICIAL:

Brent Jones

Adjutant / Quartermaster
Department of South Dakota
VFW

BY ORDER OF:

Rick Vanden Hoek

Commander
Department of South Dakota
VFW



General Orders Commander

August flew by quickly. It was a busy month for many of us on the COA. The National Convention was a success. Although our resolution did not get passed for expanding VFW eligibility, it did make it through committee and to a vote on the floor. It brought on some good discussion on the way forward and the changing warfare environment. I want to thank all the attendees for their hard work at the convention. August also means we were at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. My Senior Vice and myself had the opportunity to visit 5 post while we were out there. I want to thank them for the hospitality while we were out there. I also want to thank the volunteers that take care of Memorial Park during the rally. I was also able to attend the Scotland Rodeo Parade. They do a great job and work with all veterans' organizations in the area to make a successful parade.

Upcoming events include the start of district meetings and the fall conference. Please get your registrations in for the conference. The golf event on Friday morning should be fun. I have not golfed in years but will be good entertainment for you to watch. September also means the State Fair and Labor Day events. If you can attend the fair and assist at the booth, it would be greatly appreciated. Please get ahold of Dale Greenfield if you can assist. If there is a Labor Day event in your community, get involved. Our best recruiting method is being visible in the community.

The Big Ten Conference is 16-18 October in Kalamazoo, MI. If you have never been to one, it will be a great event. Please reach out to a Line officer or the QM/ADJ if you are interested in attending. Every event we attend is a learning opportunity for the VFW. Learning our history and how other departments do things strengthens our department.

Membership is always a push. Please work the at large list. It is beneficial for the post to gain life members. Every year the post gets money from national for each life member. Smaller posts can really benefit from this. It does not help Department numbers but will count towards post membership numbers. I will be working on some recruiting incentives coming up shortly.

The Take Care of American Veterans Act (TCAVA) is still a hot topic. We need to ensure that we are advocating for the right things for our veterans. The veteran's groups are starting to come together on the way forward with this and what we want changed. We need to protect current benefits and benefits for future veterans. I know the way it is being pushed is that this is the only way to pay for the Richard Star Act. That is not true. National VFW has presented other ways to pay for it, but they are being ignored. Let's advocate for what is right and make our politicians "Honor the Contract." We held up our side, time for them to uphold their side.

I want to finish by thanking everyone for all you do for the VFW. The Post level is where things happen. I ask for your continued support through this command year. We are a great department and have momentum to make it better. Get involved, get people motivated, and let's continue to help our veterans.

General Orders September 2026

SR Vice Commander

In August I spent some time at the Sturgis Rally talking to Veterans. I visited the Rapid City, Custer, Deadwood, Spearfish and Sturgis Post with the State Commander. I also attended the annual VFW Baseball Meeting in Madison and went to Eureka for a visit. I plan on visiting a more posts throughout the year.

In September we will be at the South Dakota State Fair; we will have a booth in the expo building. Stop by and visit if you are at the Fair. Fall Council will be in Rapid City 25-27 September. I encourage our members to attend.

If you haven't distributed flyers for Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy let's, get them to the school districts and community bulletin boards. Don't forget to post to your social media accounts if you have one.

Dale Greenfield

State Senior Vice Commander

dale.greenfield@yahoo.com

Cell: 605-350-2319

September – Running Effective Post Meetings

Well-run meetings are one of the hallmarks of a successful VFW Post. Post meetings should follow the VFW Ritual and established parliamentary procedure, allowing every member an opportunity to participate while ensuring that the business of the Post is conducted efficiently and fairly.

A prepared agenda, a proper quorum, and respectful discussion are essential to productive meetings. Decisions should be made through properly presented motions and votes rather than informal discussions or side conversations. The minutes should accurately document the business conducted at each meeting. This includes clearly recording the motion made, the name of the member making the motion, the member who seconded the motion, the discussion that followed, and the outcome of the vote.

The minutes should clearly reflect whether a motion passed or failed. When there is any doubt or uncertainty about the outcome of a vote, a roll-call vote may be taken or a raising of hands to clearly establish and document each member's vote. Accurate minutes provide an important record of the Post's actions and help prevent misunderstandings later.

Effective meetings build confidence in Post leadership. When members know that business is conducted according to the VFW Ritual, fairly, openly, and with proper procedures, they are more likely to remain engaged and support the mission of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Yours in comradeship,

Dan Klimisch

State Judge Advocate VFW – Department of South Dakota

Post 791

Greetings Comrades,

I hope everyone is having a good summer. I want to share some VA healthcare news for the month.

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs today announced the launch of a new clinical trial to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of psilocybin to treat major depression in Veterans, including those with concurrent post-traumatic stress disorder.

The new trial comes after President Trump's recent executive order on "Accelerating Medical Treatments for Serious Mental Illness," which aims to increase clinical trial participation and accelerate innovative research models and drug approvals for psychedelic drugs.

- The Department of Veterans Affairs announced the creation of a \$29 million fund that will provide assistance to eligible homeless Veterans and Veterans participating in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program.

As part of the program, VA medical centers will be able to provide goods and services to Veterans, starting in early FY2027. Up to \$11 million worth of this aid will be distributed to homeless Veterans upon the recommendation of VA clinicians across the country, and VA will track the distribution of this assistance nationally.

- The Department of Veterans Affairs has secured a record-high \$10.44 billion in pharmaceutical price reductions so far in fiscal year 2026 – nearly double the value achieved in the last year of the Biden Administration.

Hunting season will soon be here so start thinking about your fall and hunter safety.

David Huntimer

Department Surgeon

Department of South Dakota

General Orders, September 2026

Martin Christensen, VFW Past SD State Commander

I've been working on membership for the 26-27 year. We completed raffles at County Fair in July and August, Pre-Sturgis in Mitchell and the Sturgis Rally at VFW Post 2730. We also hosted Bingo during Corn Palace week with a raffle/membership table outside.

I attended the National VFW Convention in Reno, NV. It was my honor to accept the Dept All-American award for the State of South Dakota. This was definitely a joint effort by all of our team members. I salute you all. We worked hard on the SD resolution. It passed the committee but not on the floor. I'm sure it will be back again for a vote.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall Conference in Rapid City. I also plan to attend the Big 10 Conference in Michigan in October. I invited the past State Commanders from Minnesota and North Dakota to the golf tournament at the fall conference. This will be played at Ellsworth AFB.

Martin Christensen, Past 25-26 Commander Dept SD VFW

Comrades,

I recently had the privilege of attending the VFW National Convention in Reno. It was a great opportunity to meet fellow VFW members and Veterans Service Officers from across the country, share experiences, and learn how other departments are working to serve veterans and their families.

I also had the opportunity to sit on the Veterans Service Committee, where we heard some great discussions and debates about the challenges facing our veterans and, more importantly, what we as an organization can do to better serve them. These conversations are a reminder that our mission does not end when we leave a convention or meeting room. It continues every day in our communities.

One of the sessions I attended focused on alternative therapies for mental health conditions. We heard powerful testimonies regarding psychedelic-assisted therapies and the potential they may have for veterans struggling with certain mental health conditions. The VA continues to study these treatments through controlled clinical trials at five locations across the country, including facilities in Alabama, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

I also had the privilege of working alongside VFW National during this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Throughout the Rally, I met veterans and family members from across the country and had the opportunity to hear some incredible stories about their service, sacrifices, and lives after the military.

But those conversations also reinforced something we should never forget: there are still veterans out there who do not know what benefits they have earned.

Some have been out of the military for decades and have never spoken with a Veterans Service Officer. Others filed a claim years ago and never looked at their benefits again. Some simply believe they do not qualify for anything.

Keep spreading the word. Keep reaching out. Keep looking after one another.

As I always say: Don't do anything I wouldn't do but if you do, do it twice.

Semper Fi!

Dave Denson

South Dakota Department of Veteran Affairs

Field Veterans Service Officer

605 940-9622

Accreditation Number 52610

From the Adjutant/Quartermaster's Desk

- Thank you to those who have already turned in your Post Bond applications.
- If you have any issues with reporting community service activities to the Dashboard, please contact me. Some of the usual mistakes are simply incorrect dates or not having a category selected. Please add your hours, members, miles, and any donation dollar amount. Get credit for what your members are doing. Report, Report, Report.
- The National Dashboard will show community service as red until the 4th quarter. Don't worry, it is a programming thing and you can continue to support the All-State program to stay on track.
- The National site will be shut down while they complete year-end processing. I hope you all got your At-large names transferred already. If not, you can continue doing it after OMS is back online.
- Please use the sponsorship information below to help develop and build your partnerships with local businesses.

Any questions, please contact me at 605-759-7127 or brent@vfwdeptsd.com. See you in Rapid City,

For The Veterans

Brent Jones

Adjutant/Quartermaster

VFW, Department of South Dakota



DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

★ VFW ★

FALL Conference



24-27
SEPTEMBER
2026



**RAPID CITY,
SOUTH DAKOTA**

Join us at the



RAMKOTA
HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER



2111 N LACROSSE ST
RAPID CITY, SD 57701



WWW.RAMKOTA.COM

The South Dakota VFW proudly represents
over 7,000 members across the state.

This year (July 1 – June 30) our members have:

- ★ Donated over **\$444,000**
- ★ Provided over **36,000** hours
of community service

OUR MEMBERS ARE:

- ✓ Ensuring every Veteran has a proper internment
- ✓ Spreading cheer at VA & nursing homes
- ✓ Retiring millions of American flags with dignity
- ✓ Conducting food & clothing drives
- ✓ Providing \$1000s in scholarships
- ✓ Advocating in Pierre & Washington, DC
for our Veterans & military families



RESERVE YOUR ROOM

Scan to book your
stay at the Ramkota!



REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE

Scan to register
today!



COMRADESHIP
WITH VFW FAMILY



TRAINING
& LEADERSHIP



SERVICE
TO VETERANS



SOUTH DAKOTA
STRONG

★ NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.® ★

Department of South Dakota

1600 W Russell St, Ste 135

Sioux Falls, SD 57104

605-759-7127

Email: brent@vfwdeptsd.com

Greetings,

The South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Auxiliary are pleased to announce that the 2026 Fall Conference will be held at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center in Rapid City, SD September 25-26 2026, at 2111 N Lacrosse St, Rapid City, SD 57701.

The VFW has long stood as a voice for veterans, military members, and their families while continuing to strengthen the communities we call home. The Department of South Dakota VFW proudly represents more than 11,000 members across our state, and our organization continues to grow each year.

This past fiscal year our members have contributed over \$444,000 in donations and more than 36,000 hours of community service throughout South Dakota. These numbers represent real people making a real difference.

Our members are out in every season and all-weather conditions to ensure veterans receive proper military honors and dignified internments. We visit VA facilities and nursing homes to bring comfort and companionship to veterans. We organize food drives, clothing drives, and community outreach events for those in need. We ensure millions of American flags are respectfully retired with honor and dignity. We also provide thousands of dollars in scholarships and youth program support to help invest in future generations.

In addition to community service, the VFW remains one of the strongest advocates for veteran rights and benefits. Our members work directly with legislators in Pierre and Washington, D.C., ensuring the voices of South Dakota veterans and military families are heard on issues that impact their lives.

The Fall Conference brings together VFW leaders and members from across South Dakota for training, networking, legislative discussion, and planning future service efforts. Sponsorships help offset our conference expenses and allow us to continue expanding programs that directly benefit veterans, their families, and local communities.

We would be honored to have your organization partner with us in supporting this important event. Any contribution, sponsorship, or donation would be greatly appreciated and will directly assist us in carrying out our mission of service.

Thank you for considering this request and for your continued support of veterans across South Dakota. If you would like additional information or would like to discuss sponsorship or partnership opportunities, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Community Sponsor - \$500

- Full page recognition in conference program book
- Social Media recognition
- Verbal thank-you on all days during the event

Silver Sponsor - \$1,000

- Full page recognition in conference program book
- Social Media recognition
- Verbal thank-you on all days during the event
- Logo placement on sponsor banner
- Three months of placement on website as sponsor
- Table in vendor area

Gold Sponsor - \$5,000

- Full page recognition in conference program book
- Social Media recognition
- Verbal thank-you on all days during the event
- Logo placement on sponsor banner
- Three months of placement on website as sponsor
- Table in vendor area
- Table for eight at Saturday night banquet where organization will be brought to stage

Platinum Sponsor - \$10,000

- Full page recognition in the next two conference program books
- Social Media recognition
- Verbal thank-you on all days during the event
- Prominent logo placement on sponsor banner for the next two events
- Six months of placement on website as sponsor
- Table in vendor area
- Table for eight at Saturday night banquet where organization will be brought to stage

Presenting Sponsor - \$15,000

“All advertising for event will be Department of South Dakota VFW Fall Conference Presented by...”

- Full page recognition in the next three conference program books
- Social Media recognition
- Verbal thank-you on all days during the event
- Prominent logo placement on sponsor banner for the next three events
- Twelve months of placement on website as sponsor
- Table in vendor area
- Table for eight at Saturday night banquet where organization will be brought to stage

(Limited to one sponsor)

Vendor Tables

An 8ft table with white tablecloth, and two chairs will be provided if electricity is needed, please inquire for availability. Comes with a ½ page color add in program booklet.

Non-Profit Organization - \$100

Veteran Owned Business - \$200

All others - \$300

Advertising opportunities in the conference booklet

- Conference Program Book size is 8 ½" X 11" - Book ad rates are as follows:

<u>PAGE SIZE</u>	<u>B&W RATE</u>	<u>COLOR RATE</u>
Full Page	\$150.00	\$200.00
1/2 Page (8" X 5 1/8")	\$75.00	\$125.00
1/4 Page (3 3/4" X 5 1/8")	\$50.00	\$80.00
Business Card	\$35.00	\$45.00

**Ads should be formatted as JPEG or into a Microsoft word document to meet printer's request. All ads should be sent electronically via email to brent@vfwdeptsd.com*

**Deadline for ads for Conference Program Book is September 4, 2026, at 4:00 pm CST.*

We are also offering the opportunity for businesses to supply promotional material by September 16th, 2026, to be placed in the Conference welcome bags for attendees.

Mail payments to:

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

OR

Go to the link or QR Code to send payment.

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/fall-conference-2>





VFW & AUX FALL COUNCIL REGISTRATION FORM

September 24-27 2026

Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center
605-343-8550
2111 North Lacrosse Street
Rapid City, SD 57707

Room Rate - \$109.99/night + tax
*Limited rooms available

Call Hotel for
Reservations

**RESERVE
YOUR ROOM**

Scan to book your
stay at the Ramkota!

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

Email: _____

Full Name: _____

Title: _____ Post#: _____

City: _____ State: _____

VFW/AUX: _____ Beef or Chicken

Guest Name: _____

ONE REGISTRATION FORM PER PERSON



Register Now for Fall Council 2026 - \$50

Guest Banquet Tickets - \$40



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

Questions? Contact Brent Jones: brent@vfwdeptsd.com