General Orders

NOVEMBER 2026

COMMUNICATIONS

Please take the time to update your contact Information with the Post, Department, and National. Login and update your personal information in OMS on the National site.

Commanders and Quartermasters, please send your current email address and phone numbers to brent@vfwdeptsd.com

COMMUNITY SERVICE

REPORT, REPORT, REPORT

If you have not entered your Community Service on the State Dashboard, please do so. If you are having trouble, please contact Brent at the Department office. 605-759-7127 or brent@vfwdeptsd.com

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11TH

Posts are urged to plan and implement a suitable program for Veterans Day. Remember, "No One Does More for Veterans!" Let's honor our brothers and sisters by making sure they are celebrated.

Happy Veterans Day Comrades!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

As we honor Veterans Day and gather in gratitude this Thanksgiving season, I want to extend my deepest thanks to each of you. Your service, sacrifice, and steadfast commitment to our nation makes our communities prosper and our VFW family strong.

May this season bring you moments of peace, reflection, and joy surrounded by loved ones. You are the living legacy of courage and camaraderie, and I am profoundly grateful to stand beside you in our shared mission of service.

With heartfelt appreciation and warm wishes for a blessed Veterans Day and Thanksgiving.

Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars

-State Commander, Rick Vanden Hoek

Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Teacher of the Year

These are a few of our core programs we participate in nationally with the VFW. These programs are great for helping us shape America's future, while instilling a love for our Country and Veterans. We honor the teachers and students who go the extra mile to help make this country as great as it is. Submissions for Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen have been closed and are ready for judging. The Department VOD, PP, and Teacher chair is Dale Greenfield. He can be contacted at 605-350-2319 or dale.greenfield@yahoo.com





VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM MONTH

For the members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, November is Veterans in the Classroom month. Each member is encouraged to volunteer to be presenters in the classroom.

After your event, make sure to update the State Dashboard for your community service to get the credit!

www.vfwsd.org

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

JANUARY 24 & 25, 2027

The annual Legislative Conference is scheduled for the 24th & 25th of January, 2027. All VFW business and events will take place at AmericInn in Fort Pierre, SD. On Sunday, the 24th, we will be having a "Soup"er Social at the American Legion Post #8 in Pierre. Bring your best soup to try and win a prize!

Registration and agendas are at the back of these General Orders

www.vfwsd.org

SEND ALL STUBS AND MONEY FOR THE COMMANDER'S RAFFLE TO THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE:

1600 W Russell St, Ste 135

Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Big Ten, 2026



OFFICIAL:

Brent Jones
Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of South Dakota
VFW

BY ORDER OF:

Rick Vanden Hoek
Commander
Department of South Dakota
VFW

General Orders November
Commander

October has come and gone. Fall is in full swing and the weather is changing. The holiday season is closing in on us and the snow will fly before we know it. My command year is 1/3 of the way complete and I am proud of every one of you for the work you are doing for the VFW.

October was a busy month. The Big Ten conference was a success with a great showing from the VFW and the Auxiliary. The training was good and so was the comradery. It is always good to connect with veterans from other states and learn from them. The Big Ten has a good team. On a side note, the Dept of SD is leading the Big Ten in membership. Through many phone calls, texts, and emails, lots of work was accomplished this past month.

November is also going to be busy. Election Day is amongst us and take time to vote if you have not already voted. Let's make sure we are voting for those who will take care of our veterans. Veterans Day is important to all our veterans. Please report all you do in the dashboard so you can get credit for it. I will be on the go for about a week straight over Veterans Day. I will be advocating for veterans with our Congressional Delegation. We need to get a clean Major Richard Starr Act on the floor and voted on, and we need to keep TCAVA off the floor until it is fixed. I will be heading out to Rapid City for their Veterans Day Parade and then to Gettysburg for the Purple Heart pheasant hunt. I am looking forward to representing the Department at both events.

When talking about legislation at a national level, we need to present ourselves professionally when representing the VFW. The VFW does the best job when it comes to advocating for veterans. Watch for some information coming down from the department to push on social media about Richard Starr Act and TCAVA. National wants to make a big push before this legislative session ends. Watch for an Action Alert also coming down. Send that to friends and family. You do not need to be a VFW member to act on Action Alerts. We need to let our delegation in DC know where the VFW stands on veterans' issues.

The Holiday season is here and this can be a hard time for some veterans. Make sure that we are reaching out to those in need. Make a call to someone you haven't heard from in a while. Make a point to let them know they are not alone or forgotten. There are many Soldiers and Airmen from the state that will be deployed during this time. Let's make an effort to let them know that we are there for them while deployed. I would encourage all posts and auxiliaries to put together care packages for those deployed over the holidays.

I cannot finish before I talk a little about membership. As of the time I wrote this, the Department is at 90.55%. For this time of year, that is not bad. I would like us to get to the 100% by the end of April. That is 6 months away and very achievable. I am asking you to work for our veterans. When we reach our membership goals and exceed them, that is a bigger voice when we try and push legislation at both the state and national levels.

My motto is "One Team, One Mission". The team is all veterans' organizations and their auxiliaries. Our mission is veterans. Let's work together to ensure that we are doing the best we can to take care of our veterans. I appreciate all you do for the VFW and our veterans. Let's make the Dept of SD the envy of all departments by how we take care of our veterans.

Rick Vanden Hoek
Commander

General Orders November 2026

SR Vice Commander

We need to get out and support some Veteran Day activities. I am the Master of Ceremonies for the Huron program at the Huron High School Auditorium. I am attending programs at an assistant living facility, a nursing home, and at a local Christian School. I am going to be the guest speaker at the assistant living facility. When you are done with these activities make sure that you input the community service into the dashboard.

We will be judging Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy at the Post level and District level during November. Teacher of the Year judging will also be accomplished this month. Let's get the judging done and winners promoted to next level.

Hopefully everyone is also working on the Public Service Awards that are due 31 December 2026.

Dale Greenfield

State Senior Vice Commander

dale.greenfield@yahoo.com

Cell: 605-350-2319

Department of South Dakota VFW
November 2026 — General Orders Message

Comrades,

I learned a great deal at Junior Vice Commander training and will continue to use the resources provided to strengthen my knowledge and better serve our Department.

One topic emphasized during training was the grants available through the VFW Foundation—the same opportunities I discussed during my class at Fall Conference. The presenters felt these grants are underutilized, and I agree. I encourage our Posts to explore how these resources could support their work in our communities. Please reach out if you have questions about the grants or how to use them.

Post 1273's Boots on the Ground was a great success, serving 160 people, including 82 veterans. Days like that remind me exactly why I do this. With the daily challenges, differing opinions, and disagreements we face, it can be easy to lose sight of our purpose. Sometimes we need to take a step back and remember what brought us together in the first place: taking care of veterans. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event possible and put that purpose into action.

With Veterans Day and the holiday season approaching, please remember to take time for yourselves as well. This is often a busy season in the VFW, and caring for ourselves helps us continue caring for others. I will be busy helping with our Veterans Day parade here in Rapid City and a free Thanksgiving Day dinner.

As your Posts carry out these activities, please make sure someone is taking pictures and sharing them on social media. These stories help the public see the work we do, the veterans we serve, and the difference we make in our communities.

I hope everyone has a meaningful Veterans Day and a wonderful Thanksgiving. Please reach out if you need help or support. I am here in this position because of you and for you, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Moving the Mission Forward

Kat Pyka
Junior Vice Commander
Department of South Dakota VFW
719-661-9738
adj@vfw1273.org

November – Financial Oversight and Accountability

Good financial management is one of the most important responsibilities of Post leadership. Every dollar entrusted to a VFW Post belongs to the organization and should be handled with care, transparency, and proper oversight.

Post officers and trustees should understand their financial responsibilities and ensure that expenditures are properly authorized and documented. Financial records should be maintained accurately, reports should be presented as required, and appropriate controls should be in place to protect Post funds. No officer should view the Post's money as personal funds or operate outside established procedures.

Financial problems can damage a Post's reputation and, more importantly, can undermine the trust that members have placed in their leadership. Strong financial oversight is not about questioning the integrity of fellow members; it is about having good procedures that protect everyone involved.

Yours in comradeship,

Dan Klimisch

State Judge Advocate VFW – Department of South Dakota

Post 791

From the Adjutant/Quartermaster's Desk

- Please look at the Dashboard. It is showing some great efforts by many of the Posts and a few areas where we can make some improvements. If it is red, it might need some action taken to improve it.
- I have had a couple of questions recently about the Election Reports on the Dashboard. The Dashboard shows reports that are due between 1July-30June of the current fiscal year. Election Reports that are due during this fiscal year (NLT 1June2027) will be submitted this coming spring and will be the last requirement shown on the Dashboard for this year's Good Standings columns.
- Last month I asked that every Post submit a Community Service Report under the Additional Reporting column with an updated phone number and email for the Commander and Quartermaster. Thank you very much to the 4 Posts that have already completed the task. Please submit the information if you have not already done so.
- Great job by Posts 3507 Britton, 2755 Redfield, 4674 Winner, and 6897 Armour in achieving the Commander in Chief's 5% increase to Community Service reporting. We have a lot of Posts that are on track to meet the requirement. Please continue to report, report, report.
- Please submit your Trustee Audit Reports. We only have a couple left in each District.
- The Department has received Meta AI glasses to be issued, at no cost, to eligible, vision impaired, veterans and family members of veterans. More information will be sent out in emails to all Posts this coming week.
- Please see the additional information attached below for your reference, and please register for Legislative Conference early.

If your Post has any questions or may require my assistance in any way, please contact me at 605-759-7127 or brent@vfwdeptsd.com

For The Veterans

Brent Jones
Adjutant/Quartermaster
VFW, Department of South Dakota

2027 SOUTH DAKOTA VFW & AUX LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION FORM

January 24 - 25, 2027

Full Name: .....

Email: .....

Telephone Number: .....

Title: .....

Post Number: .....

ONE REGISTRATION FORM PER PERSON

Registration Fee - $50

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

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

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

VFW LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE AGENDA

January 24 & 25, 2027

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

Sunday, January 24

10:00 am - 4:30 pm
AmericInn
312 Island Dr.
Pierre, SD, 57532

5:00 pm – 8:30 pm
American Legion Post 8
520 S Pierre St
Pierre, SD 57501

Business Meetings

10:00 am - Registration Open

10:00 am - Committee Meetings • Audit, Budget, Legislative, Membership & Bylaws

Lunch on your own

1:00 pm - Council of Administration Meeting • Business/Business Casual

5:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Social Hour & Supper at American Legion Post 8 • Cash Bar
Soup competition with sandwiches

Monday, January 25

9:00 am - 11:00 pm
State Capitol Building

12:00 pm - 8:30 pm
VOD/PP/TOY Banquet & Legislative Mixer:
AmericInn
312 Island Dr.
Pierre, SD 57532

VOD/PP/Teacher Banquet

8:00 am - Winners will meet at AmericInn for a tour of the Capital Building, and a meet-and-greet with Legislators. Suit and Tie

National Guard Tour on your own.

12:00 pm - Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teachers of the Year Luncheon Banquet. Suit and tie.

Storm the Capitol! Schedule meetings with your hometown Legislators between 8:00 am and 11:30 am. Push the Legislative Priorities for the VFW!!!! Suit, tie, & VFW member cap!

Legislative Mixer

5:00 pm - Legislative Mixer • hors d'oeuvres. Members & Legislators will receive 2 drink tickets each.

Legislative Updates

For the most updated legislative bills go to: https://sdlegislature.gov/