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The Official Publication of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of South Dakota

Vol. 73 Issue 4

Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, Teacher of the Year Winners Legislative Conference, Ft. Pierre, South Dakota

The State of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliary announced its Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen State Champions at the banquet held in Ft. Pierre, January 15, 2017.

Voice of Democracy - Max W. Hawkins, a senior at Sioux Falls, Roosevelt High School. Sponsored by the VFW Post 628 and its Auxiliary, District #2, Commander Tom Anez. Recipient of \$500 cash monetary award, a specially designed plaque and expense paid trip to Washington D.C. Hawkins participated in the National Voice of Democracy competition and placed 15th Place nationally and was the recipient of the \$2000.00 Scholarship award. He also received an all expense paid trip to the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, PA this summer. See winning essay on page 10.

Avery E. Blackman, a student from the Sioux Falls, Edison Middle School was awarded First Place in the Patriot's Pen Scholarship program and received the "Glenn McFarland" Award and is sponsored by his family in his memory. Glenn was a dedicated volunteer of the VFW program and held the position of Chief of Staff in 1998-99. The recipient of this award received a \$250.00 cash award and specially designed plaque presented by the Department of South Dakota and its Auxiliary. The year's winner was sponsored by the VFW Post 628 and its Auxiliary, Commander Diane Diekman, President Mary Kirkvold; District 2, Commander Tom Anez, President Lois Ladegaard. See winning essay on Page 10.

THE 2016-2017 PATRIOT'S PEN FINALIST



L-R: VFW PATRIOT'S PEN Chairman, Keith Blume; State Auxiliary President, Karen Sharp; Bryce D. Frank, Burke Public School - Sponsored by Burke VFW Post 9950; Avery E. Blackman, Sioux Falls, Edison Middle School - Sponsored by VFW Post 628; Colin Kruse, Lesterville, Scotland School District - Sponsored by Scotland VFW Post 2966; National Auxiliary Representative, Peggy Haaks of Kahului, Hawaii; Vickie Rossie, PDP, National Auxiliary District 23 Councilwoman; State Commander, Dennis Sharp. Donita Mullinex, Auxiliary State Conductress, State Program Leadership and Chairman for this program.

THE 2016-2017 VOICE OF DEMOCRACY FINALISTS



L-R, Row 1: VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY Chairman, Keith Blume; State Auxiliary President, Karen Sharp; Max W. Hawkins, Sioux Falls, Roosevelt High School - Sponsored by VFW Post 628; Joshua E. Borah, Wessington Springs, Wolsey-Wessington Springs High School - Sponsored by Wessington Springs VFW Post 5548; McKenzie L. Volesky, Webster, Webster Area High School - Sponsored by Webster VFW Post 4690; National Auxiliary Representative, Peggy Haaks of Kahului, Hawaii; State Commander, Dennis Sharp. Row 2: Kale E. Cruse, Lesterville, Scotland High School - Sponsored by Scotland VFW Post 2966; Samantha G. Gordmaker, Pierre, T.F. Riggs High School - Sponsored by Pierre VFW Post 2038; Cheyenne D. Davis, Belle Fourche, Belle Fourche High School - Sponsored by Belle Fourche VFW Post 3312; Amanda E. Audersch, Sioux Falls, Harrisburg High School - Sponsored by Canton VFW Post 3164; Vickie Rosse, PDP, National Auxiliary District 23 Councilwoman; Auxiliary Chairman, Donita Mullinex and State Program Leadership.

Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, Vince "B.J." Lawrence and Auxiliary National Conductress, Sandra Onstwedder to Represent National Organization at the 87th Annual State Convention in Pierre, June 22-24, 2017



Bio on Page 9



Bio on Page 9



SOUTH DAKOTA (VFW/AUX) TEACHERS OF THE YEAR 2016-2017

L-R: State Auxiliary President Karen Sharp; Jody Evjen, Waverly-Shore School District Middle School; Jay Mickelson, Pierre High School; Emily Asher, Ft. Pierre St. Joseph School; State VFW Commander Dennis Sharp.

*See Page 10 for the Thank You/Appreciation Notes



WHY JOIN THE VFW - VFW and its Auxiliary strives to do great things for deserving individuals - our veterans, their families, and their communities. From local grassroots ideas to national influences, we work everyday to make a difference. It's our strength as an organization. And, with each additional membership we only grow stronger. Every eligible veteran should consider becoming a member of this elite org. **Our Mission:** To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans. **Our Vision:** Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country. **Our Core Values:** Always put the interest of our members first. Treat donors as partners in our cause. Promote PATRIOTISM. Honor military service. Ensure the care of veterans and their families. Serve our communities. Promote a positive image of the VFW organization. Respect the diversity of veteran opinions.



Dick Pickering, Editor
EDITORIAL POLICY

The mission of this paper is to strengthen the efficiency of the Veterans of Foreign Wars by providing timely, pertinent and accurate information about the decisions and activities of the VFW at the Post, District and Department level; the relevant affairs of the State and Federal governments, and the decisions and activities of the national organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from members. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of the VFW and its members. We will accept no attacks on any member or leader of the VFW. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letter column and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the VFW and its policies.

We ask that you keep your articles brief. We reserve the right to edit all articles. We look forward to hearing from you.

The news and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota or the National Organization.

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Commander's Report

Dennis Sharp



Comrades and Sisters:

Here we are in the last quarter of our year 2016-2017. It has been a busy time since the beginning of the year. First was District 10 Mid-winter Conference in Rapid City. The next two days were spent visiting the VA hospitals, first at Ft. Meade and then Hot Springs and providing a Buffalo Feed at both hospitals. Also, we visited the State's Veteran Home in Hot Springs. At Ft. Meade, we had an informative talk on what was being done for veterans and had a tour of the new surgical facilities. It is truly a "State of the Art" facility. A very

needed upgrade from what was in the past. Hot Springs VA Hospital and facilities are still operating. The facility is converting into a call center, but will continue to operate until the final decision will be made to continue or discontinue services, several years down the road.

On January 15, 2017, I attended a meeting in Sioux Falls for the VFW Baseball program and District 2 Mid-winter meeting. The VFW Baseball program was in question of continuing. After much discussion, the program will carry on, hoping to be as strong or better in the ensuing years.

The Legislative Conference was held on January 29 & 30, 2017. It was very well attended. Thank you all that took the time and effort to attend. The Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen winners were announced. The VOD winner was Max Hawkins and the Patriot's Pen winner was Avery Blackman. On Monday evening, members visited with our State Legislators on various issues concerning veterans being brought up in the Legislature.

I had the opportunity of accompany State Auxiliary President, Karen Sharp, on her National Auxiliary Mid-Winter Conference and cruise to the Caribbean. The cruise lasted 6 days and then on to Washington, DC for the National Legislative Conference. There, we met with Senators Rounds and Thune and Representative Noem. The biggest highlight for Karen and myself was to meet our Voice of Democracy winner, Max Hawkins, and have the honor and privilege of escorting him during the "Parade of

Winners". Max placed 15th out of 54 entries. South Dakota can be proud of our youth. It took us 25 years to have the privilege of doing that and Max was very happy and excited. When we first saw him, he stated that it was like family, knowing that we were there to support him.

While in Washington, DC, Russel Dramstad, D.D. Couch, Karen Sharp and myself talked to Rounds, Thune and Noem on matters concerning building our Military and Armed Forces stronger, ending sequestration and increasing VA benefits and services for veterans. They expressed their views and said they would support our concerns.

After we returned home from our excursions, we then visited and toured the VA Hospital in Sioux Falls and the Human Services Center in Yankton. The VA Hospital in Sioux Falls is in the process of completing a new addition to the hospital, and they told us what is in the store for the future. At the Human Services Center, we toured the facility and they explained what they were doing for veterans. It was very interesting visiting both facilities and hearing what they were doing for veterans.

The Department of South Dakota has not achieved 100% membership in many years. It has been the goal since our Legislative Conference to achieve 95% by March 17, 2017. I want to thank all of you for your efforts in obtaining that goal. We reached 95.05% as of March 17, 2017. 100% is still very attainable. Keep up the good work. Membership is our life blood, not only for us, but for our future veterans. Thank you for your hard work.

Looking to the future, June will be the time to elect Department officers for the 2017-2018 year. Take the time to consider taking a Department office or a District chair.

Again thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Department Commander. **Tomorrow is Today.**

Dennis Sharp, Department Commander

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Sr. Vice Commander's Report

Rick Williamson



As we near the end of Commander Dennis's year, I would like to first thank him for his guidance and support as I followed him thru the chairs these past few years. Most of all I would like to thank him for the friendship that we have made, this to me is one of the most rewarding parts of this organization. I hope you will have achieved your goals before your term expires, and look forward to your help as we continue into next year.

As I prepare for next year I am both excited and worried. I am excited to led such a great group of people, The Department of South Dakota. I would be kidding myself, and you, if I didn't admit to being a bit worried about a few things, most of all would be not living up to your expectations and mine. I am trying my best to appoint the right person to the right positions to achieve the best results for the department. It is my belief that if we work together as a team we will succeed. Success depends on the amount of attention we give to the details of every program that we do. It doesn't matter if it is the Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen, Membership, Public Servant of the Year, Teachers of the Year or any of the many other programs we do, the chairman is the key to success. If the chairman knows the program and its requirements,

relays the information to the District and Posts thoroughly and timely than it is in my opinion that the department chairman has done their job. It is not the departments responsibility to administer these programs to every district and post. That is where the teamwork comes in, each commander should appoint their chairman and encourage them to become part of the department team. Together we will achieve the results that each of our programs deserve.

During the next year, we will surely have some issues that will come up that will be difficult, however together we will overcome each obstacle that is in our way. I have always been told that you can solve any problem before you. You just need to decide if you are going to be part of the solution, or if you are going to be part of the problem. I will try my best to make the necessary decisions of this Department based on what is best for US, the VFW.

I would like to close by thanking everyone for their support and encouragement in the past, also I ask for your continued support as we move forward. I have had the privilege of having so many great members of this Department as mentors and friends, each one of you are very special to me and I thank you.

Rick L. Williamson
Sr. Vice Commander

Jr. Vice Commander's Report

Willie Page



Greetings Comrades,

I would like to take the time and effort to talk about this opportunity about one program, or as I will say the biggest opportunity we have; Membership. Every VFW function we do a lot and I acknowledge how well and great we put through the effort to do our job of recruiting and I am not asking you to change a thing. We know that our generation is very young Americans who gave their lives so we can live our lives in freedom of the country. Let us get together and

make our states a great one in the Big Ten Conference, which our South Dakota are three states is 93.56 March 2017, as Big Ten Conference is 91.67:

District 1: 96.16 / District 2: 94.25 / District 4: 91.29
District 6: 96.60 / District 8: 92.50 / District 10: 94.68

Willie Page, Jr. Vice Commander
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NEWS & PUBLICATION, VFW –Post –Pride: by Editor Dick L. Pickering

Look for VFW/AUX pride WWW.sdvfw.org This quarterly South Dakota Overseas Veterans publication, District/Posts newsletters and you will see examples of the hard work and support that have made VFW Posts and its Auxiliary in communities for more than 117 years. Many programs/projects and services designed to help service members, veterans and their families, when you think of the voice for veterans – you think of the VFW and its Auxiliary. Everyday, we're on Capital Hill and out in communities across this state ensuring your voice is heard – that your story is being told. If you want to know what is being done, here's the chance to read about everything we've been busy working on. Deadline for the next issue of the SDOV is June First, Two thousand and Seventeen. As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to dpsigns@alliancecom.net or vfwsd@aol.com

Quartermaster/Adjutant Report Darwin G. Tolzin



Another year of the VFW is coming to an end and the Department Convention coming up in June and obviously we are preparing for that. Saying that there is a lot of work to do in preparation is the understatement of the year. As in every year at this time with all the elections, a complete change in management will happen. Luckily the staffs of the department are all focused on what we have to do which makes the transition very easy. Remember, that these elections occur at the State level but also at each post. These election reports are due June 1st so we are encouraging each post to be on time. The election reports are very important and every effort should be made to get them in on time and do not forget you also need installation of these officers. Refer to your by-laws for proper procedures. Please get these reports in on time and make everyone's job easier and painless.

Sadly, that because of lack of member numbers we are downsizing from seven to five districts. I'm sure that each and every one of us is working hard to recruit members and in some cases there just isn't anybody to recruit. We have to get a little more inventive on how and whom we recruit as we know there are several out there that we haven't touched. Probably the biggest challenge we have is to be sure that when we recruit younger members and that we also give them a reason to be there whether in a task or something else that makes them feel they are a productive part of our organization.

Remember, get your Buddy Poppy orders in for Memorial Day and get them distributed to your local communities. The minimum on your order of poppies is at least five for each member you have in your post. This is the easy way that we can show the general public that we care about our past Veterans and demonstrate that we need their support.

After only a short time at the Department level each and every day I find something new that the VFW does for our Veterans. I have had the opportunity to tour a lot of our VA facilities and I am awed at what is there and what is being planned. We need to get this out to our younger members.

A big THANK YOU to our Judge Advocate Danny in combination with Rob and Vern Lind for continuing our baseball program. We still have the best there is for ALL young players. Not an easy job as there continues to be many directions that these players can go.

I hope that each of you have a spring and summer full of rewards and good times.

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

Darwin G. Tolzin, State Quartermaster/Adjutant

State Judge Advocate's Report Danny Frisby-Griffin



I've received 19 Community Service reports for the third quarter (31%, as of 02/22/2017). The Department of SD has distributed 2567 Flags, performed 291 Honor Guards, 166 Color Guards and provided 35 funeral lunches. In the category of community service, the Department has donated \$174,484.52; 17,177 hours and driven 50,164 (\$7,023) miles. Thank you for all you do!

Reminder, Post 2638 is working with the Lake County and DSU VSOs to host a Veterans Fair April 13 from 3 PM to 5 PM with a town hall meeting starting at 5 PM. The fair and town hall meeting will be held at the Prairie Playhouse on North Washington Ave. We've got the Director of the Sioux Falls VA Hospital and his claims supervisor scheduled to join us. As the program develops, we'll make sure to get the information out so anyone interested can join us. We would also love for you to swing in and check out our newly remodeled lounge.

I've recently accepted the position as VFW Baseball Chairman. Thank you Rick, for shepherding the baseball program all these years. We appreciate everything that you've done. Posts, please reach out to your community baseball programs and get them reenergized for the youth program. Our goal is to have teams signed up in March and then have the tournament schedule and brackets out as soon as possible to allow the teams to more efficiently manage their game schedules. Also, we'll be coming around and asking for help to ensure we have member representation at all the region and state tournaments. It's important that we show the players, coaches and families that we care about this program and want them to be successful.

The Council of Administration gave us permission to establish a private Department of SD Face Book Page. I'm hoping to have it up and running by the end of the month. So, be on the lookout for it. I've also started working on the 2017-2018 Forms so they will be ready right after the summer convention. If you have any recommendations to improve the forms, please let me know.

The 3rd Quarter reporting ended January 31 and were due February 10th. Please continue to submit previous Quarterly Reports as well as sending your 3rd Quarter data. Thank you for your continued cooperation and assistance.

Thank you again for your support.

Danny "Wham-O" Frisby-Griffin, Department of South Dakota; Judge Advocate
Email: danny.frisby-griffin@outlook.com

State Surgeon's Report Sean Johnson



It is so amazing to me how fast this year has gone. We made steady progress throughout the year in getting the Hospital and Safety Reports turned in with points counted. We are sitting right now at 45% for the 3rd quarter so I congratulate you for the hard work, but now we are headed into our final quarter so let's try to do even better for the last one.

With the information provided our Department has turned out some tremendous numbers this year. Let's finish Strong. I want to wish good luck to all members running for office at all levels. I am running for State Judge Advocate and I would sincerely appreciate your vote! We still need to work on the meeting our Goal of Tomorrow is Today. I hope to see you at Pierre in June!

3RD QUARTER REPORTS

No. of Volunteers	Patients Visited	Total Hours	Total Miles	Blood Unit Totals	Cards	Flowers	Other Donations	Total Expenses
487	844	2450	21,020	128	368	56	14	
		\$64,622.49	\$2,950.80	\$8,958.15	\$669	\$506.50	\$6,212.69	\$58,473.26
	Money		Hours			Miles		
	\$9,036		471			1598		

—Continued ►

National Council 2015-19



Comrades,

Our Department Legislative trip to Washington D.C. was February 26 - March 2, 2017. Those in attendance this year from the Department of South Dakota were Department Commander Dennis Sharp from Pierre, Department Auxiliary President Karen Sharp also from Pierre, National

Legislative Representative, Russel Dramstad from Huron and Myself.

The meetings were held at the Hyatt Regency, Crystal City all day on the 27th. We started off in the morning with the Committee on Veteran Service. There are 22 Veteran Service employees at the VFW National Office in Washington D.C. They work on Capitol Hill each and every day for Veterans. A lot of information in short order.

Next we had the Budget and Finance meeting which covers all operations of the National VFW. There is a 96 Million Dollar budget this year. The meeting showed there should be a surplus of money again this year.

All Departments in a joint meeting after lunch to go over all the issues to bring to our elected members from each state. The main goal for VFW to push were, sequestration, VA Health Care, VA Choice Act and more.

The National Council of Administration meet after that. It was told to the Council that National VFW would be giving a \$100,000.00 check to the WWI Museum for the 100th Anniversary. There are matching grants available for posts that have WWI Memorial they would like to spruce up. You can go to www.ww1cc.org/100memorials for information.

After the Council Meeting came the VOD and Pat Pen winners program, always a high light. All 54 VOD winners were in attendance and the top winner of Pat Pen also. Department of South Dakota VOD winner Max Hawkins came in 15 in the nation and received a \$2000.00 scholarship.

On the 28th we had scheduled meetings with Senator Rounds and Representative Noem. We were very well received at both offices and had a sit down with Rounds in the morning and Noem in the afternoon. Both meeting gave us at least 30 minutes and closer to 45. They are very interested in veteran's issues. In between times we were at the VFW National Office Building for tours of all the operations.

March 1 came with the Senator Thune, Senator Rounds and Representative Noem having a breakfast get together for all the people from South Dakota in D.C. There were well over 100 people there. It was great to mingle and find out what other organization issues are.

Every year the National Commander has his testimony in front of the Joint Veteran's Affairs Committee. There was a packed house for the Chiefs testimony and was very well received. Every member of the Veterans Affairs also asked questions to the Chief. He nailed each and every one with positive force for our Veterans. You can be proud of his leadership!

We were able to meet with Senator Thune for about 45 minutes after the Chiefs Testimony. John Thune has such a great feel for veterans and their families.

Our delegation from South Dakota VFW was quite pleasantly assured that our elected officials from South Dakota have our back side.

Yours in Comradeship

Darold D. Couch, National Council 2015-19

I want to encourage you to continue to help us get these reports in. We should get the credit we deserve for the excellent work we do. Thank you for your amazing support this year. If I can be of any assistance, feel free to contact me.

Sean Johnson
State Surgeon seanjohnson@abe.midco.net

Time for an Upgrade

By Will Huffmon
Department Service Officer



I am often surprised, when I talk to veterans around the state, that they have not explored the full spectrum of VA Home Loan programs, outside of the traditional purchase loan. Maybe the program doesn't get enough publicity. So I'm taking this opportunity to talk about the available benefits, through this great program, that can help South Dakota veterans.

To begin with, there are some basic eligibility criteria that apply to all the benefits. You must be an active duty military member or honorably discharged veteran, to include National Guard and Reserves.

Additionally, eligibility is extended to the widow/widower of any service member who died while on active duty or veteran who died from a service connected injury, illness, or disease. For any specific eligibility for the individual programs, I will address that with the benefits.

A Home Purchase Loan is the traditional VA Home Loan we are most familiar with. It can help you purchase a home at a decent to outstanding interest rate or, if you have found it difficult to find other financing. It is easy to do and the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) can be obtained through a VSO, eBenefits, and in many cases, through the mortgage lender. In my case, I got mine via my lender.

A VA Cash-Out Refinance Loan is a home equity loan. Often home equity loans are used to pay off debt, pay for college, and make home improvements or repairs. It can also be used to convert a non-VA loan to a VA loan. You can cash out up to 100% of your home's equity. To be eligible for both the Home Purchase Loan and the Cash-Out Refinance Loan, you have to have good credit, enough income to make the mortgage payment, and a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). The cool thing is that you can use these benefits more than once (applies to all of them) and in most cases, pay a reduced closing cost and fees. In some cases, based on disability rating, you may pay nothing!

The second benefit I used was the Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (IRRRL). It is also known as the Streamline Refinance Loan. It is useful in gaining a lower interest rate from an existing VA Purchase Loan. Like I stated previously, my rate was 5.9% the first 15 years and I was able to refinance the remaining 15 years at 3.22%. You can also refinance an adjustable rate loan to a fixed one. The nice thing about this is that you don't have to deal with appraisals or credit underwriting, it can be done with no "out of pocket" money, as all the fees are written into the loan, and you don't usually need your COE as you are refinancing an already existing loan. This can vary lender to lender though.

The Native American Direct Loan assists eligible Native American veterans in financing the purchase, construction, or improvement of homes on Federal Trust and Allotted Land or, reduce the interest rate on a VA loan. These loans are made directly to the veteran, the VA serves as the lender, and must be used on trust or allotted land. An additional step is that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be in place with the applicable tribe and the VA. To find out if your tribe already has an existing MOU, go to: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELoans/nadl.asp>, and follow the link to existing MOU's. Like the other VA loan benefits, you must have acceptable credit and enough income to pay the mortgage. I do know that this can be a sometimes challenging benefit to get in certain areas but, is still a good program for those who qualify.

Let's talk about Adapted Housing Grants. There are two types of grants: Specialty Adapted Housing (SAH) and Special Housing Adaptation (SHA). These two grants sound very similar and are often confused with each other (even by us so-called "experts"). The grants are provided to certain 100% permanent and totally disabled veterans to build a handicap accessible home or to modify an existing home to accommodate a disability. In fact, if you read the criteria for both, they sound nearly identical. The easiest way to differentiate the two is that the SAH grant will aid in building an entire new home and is a larger financial benefit (2017 cap: \$77,307) and the SHA grant will only modify a home (2017 cap: \$15,462). Both grants can be used up to three times.

In closing, never try to apply for these benefits without first talking to your local veterans service officer or VA Home Loan personnel. The applications can be complicated and you want to ensure you are fully eligible before applying. Additionally, if you meet the criteria for Adapted Housing grants, you likely meet the criteria for state property tax abatement, provided you are rated 100% permanent and totally disabled. Additional tax relief is available for those who are paraplegic. See your local veterans service officer or contact the State Veterans Affairs office (605.773.3269) for South Dakota state tax relief criteria.

The VA Home Loan programs really helped me when I needed it and I will always be thankful they played a key role in purchasing my first home. Look them up and see what they can do for you! Is it time for an upgrade?

VA Makes Changes to Veterans Choice Program

Changes Remove Barriers and Expands Access to Care

Who can help Veterans with questions at the VA Sioux Falls:

Primary Choice Champion: Robert Taylor
Email: Roberttaylor26@va.gov | Phone: (605) 336-3230, Ext. 7921
Secondary Choice Champion: Lisa Seeley
Email: lisa.seeley@va.gov | Phone: (605) 336-3230, Ext. 6578

Who can help Veterans with questions at the VA Black Hills:

VA Black Hills Choice Champions:
Cynthia Heaton | Phone: (605) 720-7181
Valerie Anderson | Phone: (605) 347-2511, Ext. 7632
Barb White | Phone: (605) 745-2000, Ext. 2253

From the Secretary of South Dakota Veteran Affairs Offices, Larry Zimmerman



Veterans Keep Marching On

George Washington once said, "When we assume the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen."

There was no waiting line for our men and women in uniform when they raised their right hands and volunteered to serve. There shouldn't be a waiting line when they return home and need our help getting the care they've earned.

Unfortunately, it took the government thirty plus years to recognize that there was a link between Agent Orange and the devastating health effects on our service members. Veterans waited decades to get the care they desperately needed and clearly earned. The VA now recognizes certain cancers and other health problems as presumptive diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service. Veterans are encouraged to partake in the VA's Agent Orange Registry health

exam to ensure that the research continues, presumptives are recognized and care is provided to our veterans.

Conflicts change, contaminants change, but the fact that our heroes are exposed to these toxins has not changed.

Recently the VA launched the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry in response to concerns that veterans who deployed after 1990 were experiencing a range of respiratory illnesses. The goal of the registry is to help researchers study the health effects of burn pits and other airborne hazards. We encourage veterans to visit the registry site (www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/registry.asp) to ensure that our heroes will not have to wait four decades for resolution.

Wars, conflicts and battles have been fought throughout the years and continue today. Continued research is vital if we are to complete our promise to take care of the men and women who served.

Larry Zimmerman, Secretary
South Dakota Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Legislative Conference

Comrades,

I was appointed as the National Representative for the VFW South Dakota Legislative Conference in Pierre South Dakota January 29-30, 2017 by the National Organization.

To begin with, there has been a change in Department Quartermaster/Adjutant. Darwin Tolzin has taken on the position with great progress. Thank-you for the 17 years that Rick Barg held the position for the Department of South Dakota.

The Conference was held in Ft. Pierre at the Americinn Teton Conference Center. Committee Meetings were held at 10 AM on Sunday 29, 2017 for VFW and Auxiliary, Council Meeting for VFW and Auxiliary were held at 1 PM. Joint session was held on Monday at 8 AM with VFW and Auxiliary to go over all bills that pertain to veterans and their families. We decided whether to support or not support bills as presented. At 9 AM there was Training Session for VFW and Auxiliary.

At 11:30 AM the Awards Luncheon took place for VOD, Pat Pen and Teachers of the Year. It was a packed house with all the District winners in VOD and top 3 winners in Pat Pen Contests along with the 3 Teachers of the Year. The winners of VOD and Pat Pen came from Sioux Falls. Two of the Teachers of the Year came from Pierre and the other came from Watertown.

7:00PM on Monday was the Legislative mixer, where Legislators came to a finger food dinner and went over the bills that we supported and those we did not support.

All in all the weather was very good and all meetings were a success. Thank-you to Pierre VFW and Auxiliary, along with Department Commander Dennis Sharp and his wife Department Auxiliary President Karen Sharp for the great hospitality!

Yours in Comradeship

Darold D Couch, VFW National council 2015-19

VFW National Home for Children



Each time you visit the Home, you will get chills watching the children and seeing how well the whole place runs and words cannot express the good that is done.

How is the National Home funded and how are your donations used? First the National Home is a non-profit organization unlike any other you might find. It is funded by donations. Whenever you make a donation, unless you specifically state where the donation is to be used, it will be used where most needed. Undesignated gifts provide the National Home with the

greatest flexibility as these gifts can be used for whatever is needed most at the time.

There are several funds that you could designate where your gifts could be used and they are listed below:

Amy Ross Endowment Fund: The principal of this fund is held in perpetuity and all the income earned is distributed for general purpose of the Home.

Activity Fund: Covers all expenses associated with recreational camps, music lessons and many other recreational activities.

Education Fund: Covers all expenses associated with education, training and nurturing of residents. This includes tutoring,

—NATIONAL HOME, continued on page 5

Remember comrades, the more comrades we can get involved, the easier the job becomes. So please don't ask, "What does the VFW do for me?" Ask, "What can I do to help the VFW and my fellow veterans?" If you keep passing the load off to someone else, pretty soon that someone else isn't going to be there. He or she will have passed away. So please do help, it feels good.

VFW Department of South Dakota 2017 State Convention

Set for June 22-24, 2017 in Pierre and hosted by the VFW/Aux Pierre Post 2038. VFW leaders from across South Dakota will gather at the Pierre Ramkota Convention Center to celebrate VFW/Aux successes during the 2016-2017 program year under the leadership of State Commander Dennis Sharp, and Auxiliary President Karen Sharp. Events convene Thursday morning 11am - Recruiting Trainer Seminars, 1pm - Council of Administration Meeting. 7 PM - Joint, VFW/AUX Awards Presentation. Friday, 9 am Joint Memorial Service. For additional convention information, go to the Home page at the Department WEBSITE sdvfw.org

Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

Greetings VFW members and Auxiliary,

It was a pleasure for us to meet with Commander Sharp and his wife, your new Dept. Adjutant, Darwin Tolzin, and other VFW dignitaries and give them a tour of the medical center on March 6th. We're always proud to show off your Sioux Falls VA!

As you all know, there's ongoing construction at the Sioux Falls VA! The new Primary Care addition is now complete, and we hosted an open house the end of February - and then held the local Veterans (and employees) art show there on March 9. Staff residing in this addition include Police Services and Patient Aligned Care Team Neighbors: Dietetics, Pharmacy, Mental Health, and Social Work as well as group education classes and diabetic education. Currently, Integrative Health also uses this area for Veterans tai chi and yoga classes. You may access this area using the elevator or stairs in the front foyer near the check-in desk and mural.

We also expect the inpatient med/surg remodel, surgical suites addition, and rehab medicine renovation to be completed this summer. In addition, the modular integrative Health Building is scheduled to be finished by the fall of 2017 as is the new oncology building. A ground breaking of the new location for the Sioux City CBOC in Dakota Dunes, SD will take place April 12. Solicitation for bids for a new location for the Spirit Lake,

IA CBOC will probably be on the street when you read this, and designs are expected to start this year for a mental health building near the parking lots on 26th Street and a Lab addition near the Primary Care & Specialty Medicine additions on the front of the medical center.

Things are improving with the Choice scheduling since our staff now have options to schedule through agreements with providers in the area communities. Choice is scheduled to end in August, and we anticipate the replacement program will return more control to VA. The Choice Champions at the Sioux Falls VA are Brian (Scott) Harvill (605-336-3230, Ext. 9-6576) and Josue (Sway) Torres at (605-336-3230, Ext. 9-6071.)

Please join us for the annual Sioux Falls Area Chamber Military & Veterans Affairs Armed Forces Day program on May 20 on VA grounds. Our contractors are graciously accommodating this traditional program at 10:30 AM that day. Also, the Memorial Day program sponsored by the Sioux Falls Veterans Council will occur here on May 29 at 10:30 AM. Alternate locations will be announced if weather does not allow the programs to occur.

Best wishes for a successful and enjoyable convention in June!

Shirley Redmond, Public Affairs Officer
Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

A heartfelt "thank you" from disabled vets attending South Dakota's pheasant hunt



Hunters include:

Frank Ramirez (TX) and Stephen Blair (AK).

Front row: Kenneth Westcott (AZ), Barney Hill (MO), Dan Bond (MI), and Rex Sproles (SC).

Kenneth Westcott, Wadde, AZ | I really had a great time. All people involved, in Gettysburg and the VFW post went above and beyond. The time spent was well worth it and an excellent time was had by all. Bio A marine who served in the Vietnam War in 1966-67.

Stephen B. Blair, Anchorage, AK | Have to say it was the highlight of the year. Had a great time with great people. You have a great crew there and I know any future hunt they will be great. The weather, the town people, everything was perfect. Not much of a talker but I did enjoy talking to the high school students. Thanks again for inviting me! Keep up the good work. Bio, Served two tours in Iraq and Afghanistan where he was wounded in combat patrol in the Army. Blair say, "this was fantastic and I had a great time shooting - a little hesitant at first, but then I got comfortable."

Frank Ramirez, Galveston, TX | "Thank you VFW Post 8530 for a wonderful hunt of a lifetime. Special thanks to the land owners and all the great people who gave their time and effort to make it happen. Bio, A marine who served in Vietnam in 1966-67 and lost his right leg below the knee from a bomb. Frank said he never hunted pheasant in his life and it is something he said he always wanted to do while he was alive and able. Enjoys hunting and hunted deer,

turkeys and a lot of varmints. Frank did share his experience on Sept. 10, 1966 when he heard a bomb explosion, tried to stand up and saw his bone sticking out below his knee and another part of his leg in the dirt. The medevac helicopter took him to a hospital in Da Nang.

During the 40 some years after I returned home to the United States from my combat tour in Viet Nam, the VFW is the ONLY organization of the many that was made available to me that has shown continued dedication and commitment to its combat veteran membership. I have been so impressed with the loyalty and committed dedication that the VFW has displayed to me and my comrades over the years that it has brought me to tears on many occasions. Because now it's the popular thing to do, to show patriotism to our returning combat veterans most that want to now have to go back to 40 some years ago when it was not the popular thing to do to see how the VFW was showing it to us back then, so they can mirror them. My comment to that has always been, "it's in the doing, not the say." My experience with the VFW's sponsored South Dakota Pheasant hunt in Gettysburg, SD was a once in a lifetime event. I will remember those men and women from the Gettysburg VFW and the pheasant hunt with all the additional activities that they put together for us for the rest of my life. I saw more patriotism and dedication to Veterans in that awesome town than I have seen anyplace else in the world. Gettysburg, South Dakota will always be on the top of my list for a return visit. Semper-Fi, **Daniel Bond, USMC**

Vietnam Vets: Still Coming Home

"Vietnam Vets: Still Coming Home" tells the stories of 31 Vietnam Veterans who served "in country" between 1961 and 1974. Within the pages of this unique book veterans share stories about their lives before, during, and after Vietnam. For the first time, many of these Vets open up about their witness to heroism, sacrifice, loss, success, suffering and even battlefield humor.

You will experience through their stories the lives of these men and women before their military service, and during the life-changing events in Vietnam as they share. Remember your own experiences as these Vets chronicle their tours, and as they struggle to "Come Home" from the war in Vietnam.

A gentleman by the name of Steve H. Feimer sat down one day and decided to write about these Vietnam Veterans. He has traveled and spoken to each of them, recounting their stories in their own words. The stories will make you go back in time and some will even make you cry. All of these stories will help you realize the hurt, pain, and challenges these Veterans went through in the war zone and after coming home. This book called "Vietnam Vets: Still Coming Home" has 453 pages of stories and photos recounting all those memories in Vietnam.

A website is planned and once the website is up and running, you will be able to order the book online using your credit card. In the meantime, there is a preview of one of the stories in the book which can be found on Facebook: www.facebook.com/VietnamVetsStillComingHome/. You can learn more about the book, pre-order and release date. The price of "Vietnam Vets: Still Coming Home" will be \$59.95 plus \$5.95 shipping and handling.

Cootie Corner



Cootie hospital visit was on the 12th of February, 2017. We visited 95 patients at the Sioux Falls VAMC. Pup tents one (1) and twelve (12) each donated \$500.00 to the VA Hospital in Sioux Falls. I want to thank the

Yankton 4H for helping us with our visit.

We visited nursing homes and hospitals in Yankton in March.

Grand Scratch will be held in Yankton: April 21-22, 2017.

Supreme 9th District 5-State Pow-Wow: June 16-18, 2017 in Yankton.

I want to thank you for your support the past two years.

Keep "Em Smilin" in beds of white.

Yours in L.O.T.C.S.

Dale Stibral

Grand Commander



Verne Anderson, Glen Walters, Rub Hofer, Brenda Stevens, Judy Evink, Dwight Hahn presenting check to Brenda for VA at Christmas time.

—NATIONAL HOME continued from page 4

life skills, computer and science labs, library, parenting skills, community service and more.

Helpline Fund: Provides funding for the Military and Veteran Family Helpline (800-313-4200), a free service that assists callers with a multitude of pressing issues.

Museum Fund: The current museum was developed by someone who grew up at the Home. He wanted to capture the history of the Home to share with the thousands of visitors and give alumni a special place to reconnect. A donation to this fund will help move the current museum to a remodeled handicap accessible building and go towards preserving the decades of memories that the Home has helped create.

Maintenance Fund: Covers all expenses associated with operating and maintaining the facilities and ground. (Except for sponsored building and houses.)

Recreation Area Improvement Fund: On the grounds there is a fishing pond and a recreation area that is enjoyed year round by residents and visitors. The area includes a pond, a rustic cabin for camp outs, fire pit, hiking trails, fishing docks and picnic pavilions. All activities center on the pond, which is in serious need of dredging for it to continue to be used for fishing.

Scholarship Fund: Provides for higher education assistance for former residents.

Technology Fund: Used for technology based needs, such as computers, computer support services and internal phones.

Transportation Fund: Pays for costs associated with maintaining a fleet of vehicles.

For more information visit the VFW National Home for Children web site: www.vfwnationalhome.org Or you can call 1-800-424-8360.

Verne H. Hansen, Chairman
VFW National Home for Children
VFW Department of South Dakota



State Competition District Winners

PATRIOT'S PEN

Dist #1, Grace Anderson, Sioux Falls, Canton, VFW Post 3164; Dist #2, Avery Blackman, Sioux Falls, VFW Post 628; Dist #4, Mason Comes, Waverly, Watertown VFW Post 750; Dist #6, Weinreis, Doland, VFW Post 6481 Turton; Dist #7, Colin Kruse, Scotland, VFW Post 2966; Dist #8, Bryce Frank, Burke, VFW Post 9950; Dist #10, Matea Gordan, Whitewood, Sturgis VFW Post 2730



To the Last two, before we know who is the FIRST place winner in the Voice of Democracy Scholarship program. L-R: Max W. Hawkins, Sioux Falls - Sponsored by VFW Post 628 and its Auxiliary; VFW VOD Chairman, Keith Blume of Custer; Samantha G. Gortmaker, Pierre - Sponsored by VFW Post 2038 and its Auxiliary. Via very close margin, Max took First Place. All seven participants are considered winners to get to the state level competition.



Voice of Democracy, Third Place winner, Kale E. Kruse, Lesterville, Scotland High School - Sponsored by Scotland VFW Post 2966 and its Auxiliary.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Dist #1, Amanda Anderson, Sioux Falls, Canton VFW Post 3164, Max Hawkins, Renner, Sioux Falls, VFW Post 628; Dist #4, McKenzie Violesky, Webster, VFW Post 4690; Dist #6, Joshua Blorah, Wessington, Huron VFW Post 1776; Dist #7, Kate Kruse, Lesterville, Scotland VFW Post 2966; Dist #8, Samantha Gortmaker, Pierre, VFW Post 2038; Dist #10, Cheyenne Davis, Bell Fourche, VFW Post 3312



Max Hawkins surrounded by State Auxiliary President Karen Sharp, State Commander Dennis Sharp and Max's proud parents and grandparents, showing off his special designed plaque by the Department of South Dakota.

South Dakota Patriot's Awards Program

First Place Award is the "Glen McFarland" Award and is sponsored by the family in his memory. Glenn was a dedicated volunteer of the VFW programs and held the position of Chief of Staff in 1998-99. The recipient of this award received a \$250.00 cash award and a specially designed plaque presented by the Department of South Dakota and its Auxiliary. This year's winner is Avery E. Blackman - Sponsored by Sioux Falls, VFW Post 628, District #2. See Page 10 for his First Place essay.

Second Place Award is the "Daryl and Loretta Halling" Award. Daryl and Loretta are very dedicated to the Patriot's Pen Program in supporting patriotism to our youth. Under the continued support and leadership of Past State Commander Daryl and his wife, Loretta, this program has grown to a high level with the state of South Dakota. The recipient of this award, Bryce D. Frank - Sponsored by Burke VFW Post 9950, District #8 and its Auxiliary, received a \$200.00 cash award and a specially designed plaque by the Department of South Dakota and is Auxiliary.

Third Place Award is a \$150.00 cash award and a specially designed plaque presented by the Department of South Dakota and its Auxiliary. This year's winner is Colin Kruse - Sponsored by the Scotland VFW Post 2966 and its Auxiliary.

A Special Thanks goes out to Ted "Frog" Kroger for his annual generous donation of \$1,500.00 to the VOD/PP programs. With these funds, the South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliary are able to assist our districts with funds for the cost of bringing their District winners to the perspective award presentations.



First Place Patriot's Pen Award recipient is Avery E. Blackman, Sioux Falls, Edison Middle School - Sponsored by the Sioux Falls VFW Post 628 and its Auxiliary. See Page 10 for the winning essay.



Bryce D. Frank, Second Place winner in the Patriot's Pen State Competition.



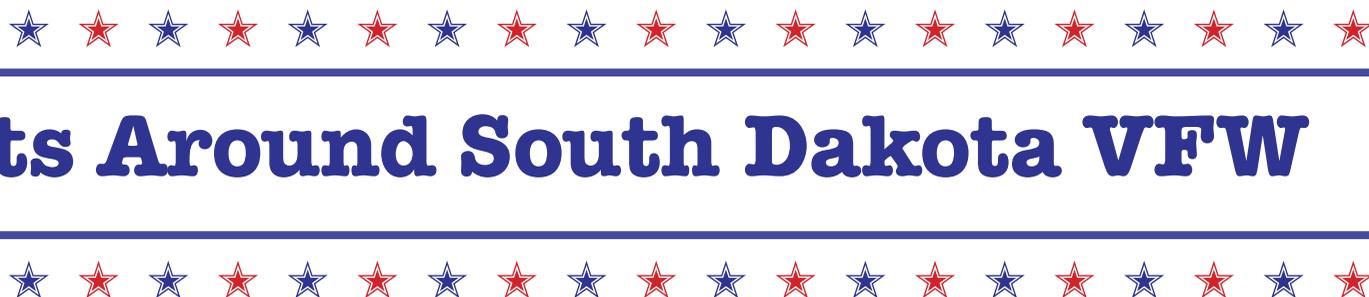
Colin E. Kruse, Third Place winner in the Patriot's Pen State Competition.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: The 2017-2018 Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy themes have been released. The Voice of Democracy theme is: "AMERICAN HISTORY: OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE." The Patriot's Pen theme is: "AMERICA'S GIFT TO MY GENERATION." It's important to note that the deadline has changed from previous years. The deadline for entries to Posts is October 31, 2017. The updated entry forms will be up on the VFW website no later than April 1st, and will be available from the VFW store soon after.

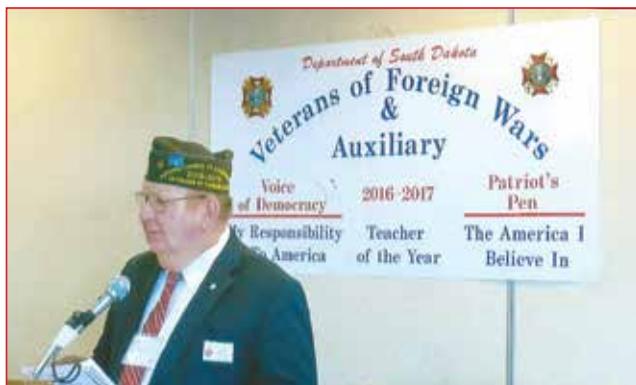
I would like to thank all the Posts, Auxiliary, and Districts for all their hard work in contacting all the South Dakota schools to give the students the opportunity to participate in the National VFW premier scholarship programs. Submitting Teachers of the Year and the contacting judges to judge the essays. Also to chaperone, Eileen Kramer for the students fun time touring of the Capital and organizing the program at the banquet. Thank you to my Co-Chairman, Donita Mullinix, for her part with the PP program. Hopefully everyone will continue to promote these programs for the future. It was a pleasure, and thank you to Commander Dennis Sharp for this opportunity, for being the State VFW/PP/Teacher of the Year. Chairman Keith Blume



Highlights Around South Dakota VFW



National Representative, Darold "D.D." Couch on the Welcoming from Commander-in-Chief, Bernard J. "Brian" Duffy, his staff in Kansas City and Washington. Giving his usual words of wisdom about the organization's progress, including its Membership plans for the future. Good job D.D.



State Commander Dennis Sharp, introducing VOD chairman Keith Blume during the banquet at the Legislative Conference, Pierre, SD



L-R: Chaplain Jerry Heggstad; National Representative, District 23 Council member, Darold Couch; Keith Blume, Dennis Sharp; State Auxiliary President, Karen Sharp, Auxiliary National Representative, Peggy Haake; PP Chairman/State Conductress, Donita Mullinix; State Chaplain, Sandi Moss.

Fifth Grade Students that sang during the banquet at the Legislative Conference. Instructor, Teacher of the Year, Emily Asher from St. Joseph School, Ft. Pierre. (A Blue Ribbon Award Winning School 2013)



Diego Ramirez, Lauren Isburg, Ryann Barry, Lainey Reinke and Abby Lott. See Page 11 for the words of the song "A SOLDIER'S CHOICE"



National Auxiliary Representative Pegge Haake, warm welcoming remarks to South Dakota banquet, etc. concerning the Veteran, Auxiliaries membership and projects, and how great this VOD/PP/Teachers Award program here in South Dakota is.



Great Entertainment by Jay Mickelson's Singing choir during the banquet.



VFW Post 750 reporting three WWII Veterans, Dr. Stanley W. Allen, third from the left, most recent new member at the age of 93, and the first as member of the VFW.



L-R: Verlyn Nordseth, USA WWII, Ray Kerstetter, USA Korea, Post Commander, Stanley W. Allen, USA WWII, Carl Lindner, USN, WWII/Korea, Larry Howell, USA National Guard, Desert Storm, Post Quartermaster.



South Dakota delegates to the VFW National Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

Capital Tour



Tour Guide, Jay Mickelson, (High School, Teacher of the Year) Pierre, doing an impressive/informative talk on the capital building and grounds. Including, i.e., past history decorating of the Governor's office, about the letter V in South Dakota, blue marble tiles on the floor, and spool in the railing that is upside down which took many years before this was noted to the public. Thank you Jay.



Delegates were able to see individually SD Representative Noem; Senators Mike Rounds and John Thune to discuss veterans' issues. L-R: National Legislative Committee Chairman, Russel Dramstead, Mike Rounds, Kristi Noem, Thune, State Commander Dennis Sharp and "D.D." Couch, National Council #23 member.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary - Dept. of South Dakota



Our State Auxiliary President Karen Sharp's theme this year is:

NOW IS THE TIME

Family - Support, Serve, Honor & Respect



Auxiliary State President's Report

Karen Sharp



SPRING IS HERE, and so is the fourth-quarter of our Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary year.

Commander Dennis and I had a busy third-quarter, and now it's time to begin preparations to wrap up our year and pass the gavel to our next leaders of the South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary.

We had a successful Legislative Conference in Fort Pierre at the end of January with great attendance and participation in all the activities. Thanks to all who took the time to attend.

Mid-February found Commander Dennis and I, National Council Member #23 Vickie Rosse, Sr. Vice President Carrie Alm, Chief of Staff Jan Endes, Historian Linda Fox and Linda's husband Dick Fox attending the National Auxiliary Mid-winter Conference, which was held on a Caribbean cruise. The meetings were informative and gave us direction for the finish of our 2016-2017 year, plus some insight as to what is to come for the 2017-2018 year. At the time of the Conference there were only a handful of Resolutions filed to be considered at the National Convention. Be looking for those in your next issue of the National Auxiliary magazine, and review them with your Auxiliary before the National

Convention. There were 13 Departments that made 100% by February 15.

Upon departing the cruise ship, Commander Dennis and I were immediately on our way to Washington, DC, for the VFW National Legislative Conference. We were met there by SD's Council member DD Couch, and Legislative Representative Russell Dramstad. Monday was meetings. Monday evening was the Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners at which time Commander Dennis and I had the honor of escorting South Dakota's winner, Max Hawkins, to the platform. South Dakota certainly can be proud of our youth. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the South Dakota delegation met individually with SD Representative Kristi Noem, and Senators Mike Rounds and John Thune discussing veterans' issues, the VA and specific concerns for our South Dakota veterans and families. We toured the VFW building in DC. All of the staff we met was most helpful. Wednesday, we attended National Commander Brian Duffy's testimony before the congressional committee. It was a packed room, which was the goal. Commander Brian Duff and his staff did an outstanding job of presenting the concerns and needs of our nation's veterans.

March 6 and 7 found Commander Dennis and I visiting the Royal C. Johnson Veterans Facility in Sioux Falls and the SD Human Services facility in Yankton. We were joined by our

VAVS representatives Connie Foss, Judy Potts and Norma Bender, SD Conductress Donita Mullinix, and Hospital Chairman Leanne Payne, VFW member Paul Payne, Betty Hodge of Auxiliary 628, and Shirley Christensen, Post 791 Auxiliary President, Darwin Tolzin, SD VFW Quartermaster, Jean Tolzin, and District 1 Commander Cody Mangold. It was great to see how much our volunteers do, what all our donations help to accomplish and to see what great facilities South Dakota has.

I'm still waiting for word of who will be running for the position of Department Guard in June.

Membership is presently at 95.20%. We still need 292 members to be 100% Plus by June 30th. Actually, that should be June 20th as Treasurer Carol will need some time to submit the final member dues. Membership is our most important program. Without each and every valuable member, we cannot successfully Serve Our American Heroes. **"UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES."**

"NOW IS THE TIME"

Karen Sharp
SD VFW Auxiliary President

Auxiliary Jr. Vice President & Membership/Leadership Chairman Report

Mary Kirkvold



As of March, we were at 94.58% for the State. We are getting there, but there is still work to do, time is running out.

One of the most important skills any successful recruiter has is the ability to identify prospective members "Hot Button." Each potential member has a "need" that has to be filled and the VFW Auxiliary can fill that need.

Members sign up for a variety of different reasons. Membership recruiters must identify which reason will

resonate with the potential member standing in front of him or her. This is where the "Hot Button" can help you "Sell" VFW Auxiliary Membership.

Which membership will entice the person to join? Interested in volunteering on behalf of the Veterans? Tell them about the Hospital Program. Look for affordable insurance? We offer discounted policies for Life, Health, Accident, Long-Term Care and Dental. Searching for Leadership opportunities? There are multiple ways for members to acquire new skills including Volunteering, Management, Fundraising and Community Outreach.

So, how can we identify each individual's "Hot Button" ...

- The first step is simple: ASK! Open ended questions

can provide a wealth of information. When someone tells you they're not a member, try asking "Why Not?"

- Step two is even easier: Find out what benefits he or she is interested in.
- Once that is established, you can move onto step three: FILL THE VOID! Offer one of the many benefits you feel is most important to them and they will likely join.

By tailoring your recruiting message to the individual of each potential member, your Auxiliary Membership totals should increase. You will never get 100% of the people you ask to join, but as you get better at identifying the "Hot Button" you will get much closer.

Department Chief of Staff

Jan Endes



Greetings Auxiliary Members,

I had just finished watching (via the VFW live stream) Cmdr. Dennis and Pres. Karen escort South Dakota's VOD winner, Max Hawkins, to the stage of the Voice of Democracy ceremony. It is presented during the VFW's National Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. As I watched those three smiling faces filled with excitement and anticipation, it reminded me of my first trip to Washington, DC.

It was, also, during the VFW National Legislative in 2008. I was with a group of South Dakotans attending the conference. Part of our group had hotel rooms in Crystal City (Dept. Cmdr. Marvin Czerwonka and Dept. Pres. Connie Heggestad, et al.) The other part of the group that I was with (Sr. Vice Pres. Diane Hickenbotham, Jr. Vice Pres. Mary Hammond,

and Dept. Americanism Chr. Linda Vail) stayed with a lovely couple in their home in Springfield, Virginia. Our hosts, Bob and Rita, were friends to Mary Hammond.

Now, in order for us four Auxiliary Sisters to be able to attend any of the VFW's functions or events in DC, we had to either take a taxi or rent a car to the train station (the Metro). And then ride the Metro subway system throughout the city. As I am certain many of you already know, traveling in or through a large metropolitan area can be rather daunting if not downright scary! Where do I go? How do I get there from here? Can I get there from here?

This is where Bob and Rita became our life savers. With both of them working in DC, they have used all available forms of transportation offered and were very well versed in them. They gave us their entire weekend being our guides in conquering the mysteries of big city travel. They loaned to us one of their cars and showed us how to get to the train station. At the Springfield Metrorail station, they helped

us purchase our subway tickets from the automated ticket machine. They instructed us on the protocol and etiquette of subway travel (yes, there is such a thing as good manners on the subway J!). They showed us how to read and decipher the maps of the six different train lines in the Metro system. Want to get to the VFW VOD ceremony? Take the blue line to the Crystal City station. Want to go to the Washington Monument? Take the blue or orange line to the Smithsonian station. Want to witness the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown? Take the blue line to the Arlington Cemetery station.

They also gave their business cards to each of us, in case we needed to contact them for anything. At the end of each day of hectic touring and meetings, they would welcome us back into their home. We would have a very enjoyable time replaying our day's adventures. Bob and Rita became our mentors during this special trip. With their assistance,

—DEPT. CHIEF OF STAFF, continued on page 9

—DEPT. CHIEF OF STAFF, continued from page 8

expertise and encouragement, they were able to change a potentially stressful and frustrating experience in a strange place into a most exciting and memorable time in our Nation's beautiful Capital.

Are you a Mentor to someone (perhaps a new member)? Can you be a Mentor to an Auxiliary member? Do I need a Mentor? I know your answer to all three of these questions is, "YES!"

The VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters has provided a marvelous publication, Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future to aid us in mentoring our new Auxiliary members. It is available on their website at www.vfwauxiliary.org and is found in the Program & Publicity Resources tab, under the Chief of Staff/Extension materials. It is a quick and informative 5 1/2 page read on: 1. "Am I Ready to Mentor Someone?" 2. "Do I Want a Mentor?" and 3. "Should Our Auxiliary Start a Mentor Program?" It is available to you free of charge. I have downloaded this resource and would be most happy to email or mail a copy to you. Each District President also has a copy of this resource.

Mentoring the new and/or rejoined members in your Auxiliary is nothing but a win/win situation for everyone. Mentoring also aids in maintaining a 'Healthy Auxiliary.' And a healthy Auxiliary can provide invaluable support for their VFW Post. A strong VFW Post can be more effective in helping our Veterans, our active military and their families. Always remember that we live by our tagline, "Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes"™.

I will end with a quote from our VFW Auxiliary National Chief of Staff/Extension Linda Compton, "Over the years, our mentoring program has taught us to assist new members in understanding our objectives and traditions as they become involved with our work. Our current members bring experience, balance and knowledge to our accomplishments as we assist all veterans and their families. The word TEAM – Together Everyone Accomplishes More – promotes the loyalty among us as we demonstrate our allegiance to all members while honoring all veterans."

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any assistance. Thank you for all you do for our Veterans and their families. Thank you Pres. Karen for allowing me to serve as your Chief of Staff. It has been a great privilege and honor. God Bless You and Yours.

Loyally,
Jan Endes
Dept. Chief of Staff/ Extension
South Dakota VFW Auxiliary
Phone: 605-452-3270
Email: tendes@goldenwest.net



VINCENT "B.J." LAWRENCE
JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

Vincent "B.J." Lawrence was elected junior vice commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on July 27, 2016, at the 117th VFW National Convention in Charlotte, N.C.

B.J. served with the United States Army from 1983 to 1986, earning his VFW eligibility by serving in Korea, where he earned the Korean Defense Service Medal.

Upon joining VFW Post 7686 in Alamogordo, N.M., in 2000, he immediately began to dedicate his efforts toward moving the organization forward into the new millennium and beyond. He has proven to be a highly effective and dynamic leader, serving in a myriad of critical leadership positions, to include being elected to command his Post, District and the VFW Department of New Mexico, as well as serving on the National Appeals Committee, and as vice chairman of the National Legislative Committee. He was also elected to the VFW National Council of Administration in 2009.

During the 2010 VFW National Convention, he joined the ranks of a select few when he was recognized for his distinctive membership recruiting achievements on the Post, District and Department levels by earning the coveted designation of "VFW Triple Crown Winner."

B.J. Attended the New Mexico State Law Enforcement Academy, New Mexico Firefighters Academy, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration Narcotics Enforcement School. He served his community as a police officer for several years, including time as an undercover agent. Prior to his retirement in 2015, he was a private investigator and owner of Lawrence Investigations.

In 2008 he became a Legacy Gold Life member. He is also a life member of the VFW National Home for Children and the Military Order of the Cootie.

B.J. And his wife, Mary, reside in Alamogordo, N.M.



A meeting with Representative Kristi Noem ...

Earlier this week a South Dakota delegation for the Veterans of Foreign Wars paid a visit to Representative Kristi Noem while visiting the nation's capitol.

From the left are Russ Dramstad of Huron, Karen Sharp of Pierre, Representative Noem, Dennis Sharp from Pierre and D.D. Couch of Custer.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTI NOEM'S OFFICE.

VFW State Officers make visit to HSC



The VFW State Officers were in Yankton for their annual visit in February to the State Human Service Center. They were giving a tour of the facility along with making donations to the hospital. The donations were made possible by VFW Auxiliary's form Winner, Burke and Aurora Count, SD total of \$900, from a projector, DVD-writer burner, clothing and toiletries. Right to left: Dennis Sharp, SD VFW State Commander; Karen Sharp, SD VFW State Auxiliary President; Judy Potts, SD VFW Human Service VAVS Representative; Jeff Turman, SD Human Service Activity Center Coordinator; Tate Mallory, SD Human Service Support Service coordinator; Cody Mangold, SD VFW District 1 Commander; Paul Payne, Plankinton, Aurora County VFW; Leanne Payne, SD VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman; Jean Tolzin, Brookings; Darwin Tolzin, SD VFW Quartermaster; Donita Mullinux, SD VFW Conductress; Shirley Christenson, VFW Post 791 Auxiliary President; Norma Bender, SD VFW Human Service VAVS Representative.



Sandra Onstwedder

National Conductress
2016-2017

Sandra Onstwedder, White Cloud, Michigan, was elected National Conductress of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) of the United States Auxiliary at its 103rd National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., on July 27, 2016.

A Life Member of Renner-Lobker Auxiliary 3306, she joined on the eligibility of her brother, who served in the United States Navy 1963-1967.

She has served the organization in several capacities including Auxiliary and District President, and as State President she earned Outstanding President of the Year for her membership group. On the National level she has served as Director for the Voice of Democracy/Patriot's Pen and Americanism/Patriotic Instructor programs and Big Ten Chairman for the Veterans & Family Support and Community Service programs.

She is a member of the American Legion Auxiliary and the Military Order of the Cooties. In her spare time she enjoys exploring the great outdoors.

Sandra and husband Charles' family includes five children, 16 grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.



East River Cemetery

Veterans attended the meeting of the Watertown city Commission held December 5, 2016, at Watertown City Hall. Dennis Solberg, a member of the Vietnam Veterans of American and American Legion, presented the idea of a State Veterans Cemetery being established across the road to the east of the Veterans War Memorial on an 80-acre parcel of land owned by the City of Watertown. The Veterans War Memorial is off Highway 20 along Lake Kampseka. Solberg said that previous meetings had taken place with the mayor, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Larry Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard and all parties were interested in pursuing a State Veterans Cemetery on the parcel of land.

In the presentation, it was noted a paved road could be installed to the north side of the cemetery along with a parking lot and a structure for cemetery us. Lights could be installed along the paved road leading up to the cemetery. The parcel could provide burial for approximately 60,000 veterans. The headstones would be set in conjunction with the National Cemeteries. Commissioners were very receptive of the idea of a Veterans Cemetery being placed at that location. Mayor Steve Thorson asked Solberg to draw up plans for the cemetery and bring them back to the Commission. Mayor Thorson said the land would remain the property of the City of Watertown and maintenance for the cemetery would be done by the city.

Teacher of the Year Award Winners

Jay Mickelson | Pierre High School

What an honor it was that you afforded me from the VFW of South Dakota! My father and father-in-law were both WWII veterans. They were very proud of their service in the USMC in the South Pacific. My mother spoke fondly of her time working in the newly completed Pentagon at the end of that war. They I watched with great pride my former students in the military in these days. It is my great pride to serve Veterans here in Pierre, especially with the Veteran's Day program where we have had so much success. My greatest joy is to see my students standing with honor, saluting the flag, singing the National Anthem with meaning and thanking our Veterans from the bottom of their hearts. I hope to go on serving you for years to come.

Thankfully,
Jay Mickelson

Emily Asher | Fort Pierre, Elementary School

My sincere gratitude goes out to the VFW, and all of those who had a hand in recognizing me for Teacher of the Year! It is an honor that I will never forget, and will serve as further inspiration in teaching students what it means to be an American and to know and respect the Veterans who've made it the best country on earth! God Bless You.

Emily Asher

Jody Evjen | Waverly-South Shore School District

Thank you South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary for bestowing me this honor. I am deeply humbled.

I am a proud mother of five grown children and three grandsons. I would like to thank my family and friends for all of their support and encouragement over the years, especially my husband Scott. I would also like thank Mr. Reed, Waverly-South Shore School principal, and my esteemed colleague Mr. Palo for nominating me.

I love my job because of my students. I dreamt of becoming a teacher since I was a small child. I am thankful to my mother for encouraging me to pursue my dream. This is my 21st year in education. I believe the best opportunity I have as a teacher is to instill values in my students. Education is important, but the most important impact educators can have is to inspire our children to become patriotic and productive citizens. By competing in essay contests over the years, it has given my students a time to reflect on the love of their country, patriotism, citizenship, respect, and historical impact. They are reminded every year and write about how fortunate they are to live in this country with so many freedoms including their education. We discuss how these freedoms would not be possible if it were not for our veterans, both past and present. I would like to express my gratitude to VFW Post 750 in Watertown for coming to South Shore School when I taught fifth grade. The students were responsible for raising and lowering the flag each day. The veterans graciously came to the school to show the children how to properly do this and also how to fold the flag in the correct manner. These types of experiences help my students respect the American flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the national anthem. They display honor in their actions and also write about this throughout the school year. This is especially needed in a world with terrorism and violence. In today's fast-paced and digital world, it is crucial that children are taught to write and express their thoughts and ideas in their writing. Thank you for sponsoring this essay contest. I am proud to say that Waverly-South Shore students have placed locally on many occasions over the years.

Thank you again VFW and Auxiliary for your service and for this award.

Sincerely,
Jody Evjen

WE SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

My Responsibility to America

by Max W. Hawkins, Voice of Democracy 1st Place Winner

America. Whether spoken through a southern drawl, or spat out in a crisp Midwestern accent, it holds the same meaning; a collection of individuals that banded together form "a more perfect union." Together we can achieve much greater goals than the sum of each citizen separately. Frequently we misunderstand this concept and associate America with the Federal Government. Instead, America is the very people and ideas it protects. It's our neighbors, our teachers, our coworkers, our families, our servicemen and women, and our ideals. America is not restricted to 535 legislators sitting in Washington. The Founding Fathers understood this concept when they instituted a republican government. We the people are the United States of America...And as a proud member of this great group, I have a responsibility. A responsibility to respect my fellow citizens, their ideals, and our fundamental rights around the world.

Differences in political opinion can make it hard sometimes to respect each other's ideas, but we often focus too much on our differing beliefs and lose track of what makes American democracy special: our ability to have our opinions heard and considered through a democratic election. It's the fact that we can voice our thoughts without fear of retribution that makes the U.S. stand out. North Korea has presidential elections too, but isn't it a funny coincidence that each one is a unanimous decision? To keep from devolving into a state like this, we need to respect each other's thoughts. Just because someone has a different view than me doesn't make them wrong; it makes democracy. Our system only works if competing ideas and information are shared and debated rather than stifled and silenced. Similar to my sworn Eagle Scout Creed which promotes civic responsibility, my American citizenship affairs my duty to vote. When I talk to my recently naturalized friends, most exclaim the biggest perk of American citizenship is the right to vote. Voting is more than a few circles on a paper. It's a direct effect on government. Boys State helped me realize this, and now I understand it is my duty to add speakers to the voice of democracy. That's what drives me to sit in my school's cafeteria day after day under a sign emblazon "Register Here" to sign up classmates to vote. It's that same drive that compelled me to continue with two lower paying campaign jobs. The voice of democracy is a beautiful sound to hear, and in order to sustain America's booming, democratic choir, it is my responsibility to respect the right to debate and vote.

Contributing to the symphony of democracy are the laws we vote on which establish our agreed-upon expectations. While it may be easy to try and lie about the factional emergency to the police officer when caught speeding, it takes a deep sense of responsibility face the music and accept a rightfully deserved ticket. Seemingly inconsequential and ration, wrongfully maneuvering out of a tick is ethically congruous to extortion and other inexcusable crimes. I didn't understand this concept until I visited an east-Asian country with a corrupt police force. After hearing my host parents discuss bribes to cover-up not just minor offenses, but murders and regulatory infringement, I was horrified. The only difference between the situations was the bribe amount. Need a better score on your child's test? Slip a few dozen dollars to the right officials. Need to cover up rampant environmental catastrophes? Just slap some zeroes on that amount! Regardless of the offense, disregarding a law itself degrades law and order. To maintain the necessary law and order in our country, it is my responsibility to respect all US laws.

Patriot's Pen 1st Place Winner, by Avery E. Blackman

However, America is not alone in the world, and others have differing views on governing. It's one thing to discuss the liberties we possess as spelled out in the Bill of Rights, but it's completely different to witness their removal first-hand and realize their true significance. There are countries today that still stifle and kill political dissidents - countries that make a mockery of law and order. I'm proud American is not one of them. Recently shaken awake by an East Asian country's internet censorship, I immediately realized the need to help spread American Ideals globally. US citizens make up only four percent of the global population, so spreading ideas to the other ninety-six percent is not only a daunting task, but also an essential duty. I've been given great gifts with my citizenship, but now is my responsibility to be a stronger voice for democracy by sharing American virtues with those past our borders.

And so, my responsibility to America is much like that of my grandfather who served as a Merchant Marine in World War Two, like that of any other proud American, and like that of JFK who said, "...to whom much is given, much is required." Having been blessed with American citizenship, I am responsible to uphold the great principles our country was founded on: freedom of speech, law and order, and the development of these values around the world.

"...that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion..."

TAPS may their souls rest in peace.

COMRADES, IN DEATH AS IN LIFE, WE SALUTE YOU!

Eureka, VFW Post 5126

Zimmerman, Roger D., Korea, USA, Life
Ulrich Avon B. Vietnam, USA
Funk Allen., Vietnam, USAF, Life
Mettler, Howard, WWII, USA, Life
Pfofle, Clarence, Vietnam, USA, Life
Oster, Henry R., Korea, USA

Pierre, Charles E. Throne VFW Post 2038

Doyle, Jerry, USN, Life
Paulson, Marvin, WWII, USA, Life
William, Bill, Korea, USA, Life
Heckenliable, Willard, WWII, USN, Life
Voeltz, Bob, Korea, USA, Life, Past Post Cmdr.
McQuiston, Ike, Vietnam, USN, Life
Ramsey, Harold, WWII, USA, Life
Adney, Richard, WWII, USMC, Life

Snow, James, WWII, USA, Life
Burg, Theodore, WWII, USAF, Life
Pool, Wayne W., WWII, USA, Life

Alcester

Hammit, Robert C., WWII, USA, Life

HURON, Tomczak-Bartels VFW Post 1776

DePauw, Darrell, Korea, USA
Haines, Steve, Vietnam
Braha, Burton, WWII, USA

Yankton, Ernest Bowyer VFW Post 791

Wiebelhays, WWII, USA
Schoenfelder, John
Ackerman, Kenneth, Korea, USMC, Life
Hicks, Clifford, WWII, USA, Charter

Cuka, Donald, Korea, USN, Life
Osborn, Frank, Korea, USA, Life
Youngworth, Thomas, Korea, USAF, Life
Ferwerda, Laytan, Korea, USA
Daughters, Roger, Vietnam, USN
Weinandt, Leo, Korea, USA, Life
Varvel, John, Korea, USA, Life

Sioux Falls, John M. Bliss VFW Post 628

Smith, Harold, WWII, USA, Life
Reiners, David, Vietnam, USA, Life
Viotor, Kenneth, Korea, USA, Life
Rich, James, Vietnam, USN, Life
Eilertson, Donald, Germany, USA, Life
Walters, Kenroy, Vietnam, USA, Life
Lanie, Vernon, Korea, USA, Life
Boehms, Gary, USN/USMC, Life

Grose, Calvin, Korea, Life
Anderson, Floyd, WWII, USN
Johnson, Robert, WWII, USN, Life
Spronk, Verlon, Vietnam, USN, Life
Tuch, Glen, USA, Life
Colton, Charles, Korea, USN, Life
Frelve, Leander, WWII, USA, Life
Asbra, Donovan, WWII, USA
Hartsook, James, Korea, Life
Jellema, Thomas, WWII, Life
Atwood, Mearl, WWII, USN, Life
Helgerson, Orville, WII, USN, Life
Sunderman, Robert, Vietnam, USMC
Adams, Ribert, Vietnam, USN, Life
Troth, John, WWII, USA
Grasser, Richard, WWII, Korea, USN, Life
Marvin, Kora, USAF, Life

Henkelman, Edward, Vietnam, USA
Hoff, Lyle, Germany

Watertown, Frank H. Adams VFW Post 750

Tesch, Lloyd E., WWII, Life
Lawrence, Arthur Jr., WWII, USN, Life



Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

2016-2017

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thomasanex@yahoo.com

District 8 Commander

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Phone: 605-224-4295



Medical Centers of the VA South Dakota Health Care Network

VA Black Hills Health Care System

Fort Meade Campus

113 Comanche Road
Fort Meade, SD 57741
(605) 347-2511
Toll Free: 1-800-743-1070
www.blackhills.va.gov

VA Black Hills Health Care System

Hot Springs Campus

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Toll Free: 1-800-764-5370
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Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

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Sioux Falls, SD 57717
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Toll Free: 1-800-316-8387

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS

VFW National Veterans Service works to ensure veterans receive every benefit available to them from their government. Our nationwide network of service officers was established to help veterans and their families file claims with the VA. This service is available at no charge and made possible through donations. Over the past three years, the VFW has helped more than 284,000 veterans recover nearly \$7 billion in compensation and pension.

Visit VFW.org/nvs to find a service officer near you.

A Soldier's Choice

*You said goodbye you left home,
You walked into the great unknown.
You were brave you took a stand,
Fought for the freedom of our land.*

*It took a lot to roll the dice,
You gave your all you sacrificed.
You were brave, you went to serve,
Lived with less than you deserved.*

CHORUS:

*We know you had to be strong
Your voice was not wrong
If you could do it all over
Would you still become a soldier?
Ooooooh, Ooooooh, Ooooooh...*

*For all the dark and sleepless nights,
Fought for the freedom of our rights
You pushed through So many fears
And you've cried heroic tears*

*So today we honor you
Fighting for Red White and Blue
We pray that God will keep you safe
And you will never lose your faith.*

Overseas Veteran Option

Effective June 2017, THE SDOV will begin to be available through the Department WEBSITE (www.sdvfw.org) What this means to you? It means that you will no longer receive a copy through the mail unless you specifically request it with the provided form in this issue. We understand that there are some members that do not have access to a computer or email and that's OK. If you want a hard copy mailed to you, then that is what you will get. A hard copy of the SDOV is FREE to VFW/Auxiliary members. All you have to do is contact the department headquarters on this form by May 15th, 2017. Please provide your name, address and post number, saying you would prefer receiving a hard copy by the USPS.

At the June 2016 Department Convention held in Deadwood, SD, it was voted to have the South Dakota Overseas Veterans publication to be posted, to review/download on the SD WEBSITE SDVFW.org If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the department headquarters, vfwsd@aol.com or phone 605-332-7441.

Name: _____
Last First Middle
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

**Mail to: South Dakota VFW Headquarters
3601 S. Minnesota Ave.
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57105**

Teacher of the Year Award

—Thank You notes on page 10—



EMILY ASHER
Fort Pierre
Elementary
School



JAY MICKELSON
Pierre
High School



JODY EVJEN
Waverly-South
Shore School
District

FIRST PLACE WINNERS

—Stories on page 10—



Voice of
Democracy



MAX W. HAWKINS



Patriot's
Pen



AVERY E. BLACKMAN

God Bless America

Cody Mangold

Running for
Department Surgeon
2017-2018



Cody Mangold enlisted in the South Dakota National Guard in 2005. He earned his eligibility to the Veterans of Foreign Wars by his deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2007 and 2008. He has been a member of the VFW since 2008, and has continued to show his passion for veterans. Ways that he has shown his passion is by taking officer positions at his local Post 791 including 2 years of Commander. During his command at Post 791 the Basement bathrooms were renovated for handicapped accessibility, and the second year a lift was placed in the Post home for accessibility to the basement. He has also been District 1 Commander from 2015 to present. During his tenure as District Commander, and sitting on the Council of Administration; he was on the Committee for Redistricting, and also proposed that the Overseas Veteran (State VFW publication) to be online. He also continues his passion by being a member of the Military Order of the Cootie, in Pup Tent 12 (Big Aggie) in Yankton, SD. He enjoys the opportunities in the Cooties to meet and talk with veterans in the nursing homes and hospital. Cody would like to continue his passion for working for veterans by running for the Department Surgeon for 2017-2018.

Words of Thanks

*A message from Deb Dodson, SD National Guard
155th Family Support chairman:*

"Nancy, a quick note of thanks and appreciation. We have received information that the SD National Guard 155th Family Readiness Group was awarded the Army NG Superior Family Readiness Group award for 2016! We will be attending the award ceremony at the Pentagon next month. Your (VFW Auxiliary) support was a direct contributor to this recognition as we would not have been able to support our families as we did without your Assistance...thank you! Deb"

The assistance provided was, in large part, the contribution made from the Day County Coyote Hunt, facilitated by Patti Mitchell. You ROCK, as does your support of South Dakota's soldiers and their families! Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

Nancy Worth, SD VFW Aux. President 2015-16



We understand the unique bond you share with other veterans of overseas conflicts because we too, have been there. Since 1899, the VFW has been the nation's leading veterans service organization in the fight to better the lives of all those who've worn the uniform of the United States military. No matter which conflict called you to service, we invite you to join us. Stand strong with the other 1.4 million members of the VFW as together, we continue to fight for all that's good **FOR VETERANS.**

DEADLINE

For the next issue (July 2017) of the *South Dakota Overseas Veteran*, the deadline is June 1, 2017.

Please submit your articles to me by that date.

Send to: **Editor Dick L. Pickering**
404 Dogwood Street
Brandon, SD 57005.

Or email them to:
dpsigns@alliancecom.net

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POST SCHEDULES

John M. Bliss
Post #628

9 am-10 pm, Mon.-Thurs.
9 am-2 am Fri. & Sat.
Lunch served 11 am-1:30 pm, M-Fri
Dinner specials every Fri. & Sat., 5-8 pm

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Post/Auxiliary Meetings
Second Thursday - 7:30 PM
Room for Parties
All Occasions
M-S Hours: 2 PM - 2 AM

Black Hills
Post 5969
Deadwood

Wednesday: Hamburger Night
Friday: Dinners

Lounge & Gaming

FRANK H. ADAMS
POST #750
808 South Broadway
Watertown, SD

Open Monday thru Friday
2:00 p.m. till 2:00 a.m.;
Saturday 12:00 till 2:00 a.m.
All Veterans and visiting
members welcome

Post Meeting Nite 3rd Wed.
Aux. Meeting Nite 2nd Wed.

THREE RIVERS
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BRANDON, SD
(The most eastern Post in SD)

Interstate 90, Exit 406
Post Meeting,
3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m..
Auxiliary Meeting,
2nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

*Welcome Veterans & Friends
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All Veterans and Visiting
Members Welcome
Meeting Night 2nd Tuesday

Rollie Bucholz Post 7319
Wagner, SD 57380
PHONE: 342-9804

Open Daily: Mon.-Sat. at 5:00
All Veterans & Guests Welcome
Short Orders served during week.
Saturday evening special dinners served

Post Meeting - 3rd Tues.
Auxiliary Meeting - 2nd Tues.

Bingo every Wed. night

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PHONE: 342-9804

Meeting Nights
MOC/MOCA Pup Tent 17 - First Thursday
VFW & Auxiliary - Second Thursday
Joint Meeting - Fifth Thursday of any Month
With Five Thursdays

Hours of Operation
Sunday-Friday - 11:00 am to Closing
Saturday - 10:00 am to Closing
Sunday - Closed
Monday-Friday Daily Lunches 11:30 am - 2:00 pm
Saturday 11:30 am to 1:00 pm
Hamburgers/Cheeseburgers or Chicken Strips and Fries
Monday Night Family Dinner Starting at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Friday Night Fish Fry Starting at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Ronald Westby
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510 S. Washington Ave.
Madison, SD 57042
256-6771

Open Mon.-Thur. 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Fri-Sat 11 am to Closing
Sun. 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Nights:
VFW 2nd Tuesday - 6 p.m.
Auxiliary 2nd Monday - 5:15 p.m.
Brunch 2nd Sunday 10 am - 12:30 p.m.
EVERYBODY WELCOME

Sturgis Veterans' Club
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Sturgis, SD

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AL Post #33 & Auxiliary
DAV Chapter 11 & Auxiliary

Kenneth Kuper
Post #3442

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Custer, SD
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Lounge Opens 2pm

Post & Auxiliary Meetings
Third Thursday - 7pm

Visit us on your trip to the Hills

Valued Supporters of the South Dakota Overseas Veteran Publication

The VFW Department of South Dakota has implemented a new program to assist in the cost of the *Overseas Veteran* publication by providing the opportunity for individuals to show their support of the award-winning South Dakota Overseas Veteran paper. Your name will appear in each of the four issues as a valuable supporter under the category of your donation.

The donations are categorized as follows: Bronze, \$10.00 per year; Silver, \$20.00 per year; and Gold, \$30.00 per year.

The following supporters are Gold category: Jonathon Thorburn; Ray Kerstetter; Lowell Stevens; Johnathan Thorun; Mike Boxa; Betty Foxa; Arnold Sattler; Burke VFW Post 9950; William & Pat Cerney; Robert Folkerts; Charles Kerkhove; Henry Whitney Custer VFW Post 3442; Marvin Gall; Linda Fox. Silver category: Gary Hills; Hobart Cole. Bronze Category: Wagner VFW Post 7319; Leonard Kisely; Dick Pickering.