The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has undertaken the most comprehensive analysis of Veteran suicide rates in the U.S., examining over 55 million Veteran records from 1979 to 2014 from every state in the nation. The effort extends VA’s knowledge from the previous report issued in 2010, which examined three million Veteran records from 20 states were available. Based on the data from 2010, VA estimated the number of Veteran deaths by suicide averaged 22 per day. The current analysis indicates that in 2014, an average of 20 Veterans a day died from suicide.
Commander’s Report

Dennis Sharp

Comrades and Sisters:
First off, I want to thank the Brandon Post for inviting me to be part of their Loyalty Day Parade. It was a great parade.

It has been fast paced for a month or so with State Judging, District Meetings, Sr.Vice Commander training in Kansas City, MO and putting things together for the State Convention. I am looking forward to being your Commander of the Department of South Dakota and thank you for your support. I will do my best to help the Department of South Dakota be recognized by the other Departments in the nation.

Some of the programs that I hope we can all do are:
1. Posts to get more involved in Community Service Programs and Projects in their communities.
2. Student Veterans Association to make student veterans aware of what is available to them to further their education.
3. Membership in recruiting, retaining and mentoring new members. Encourage Life members to consider obtaining a Legacy Life membership. The Post they belong to and the Department will benefit from this level of membership. There are three levels of Legacy Life membership: Gold, Silver and Bronze.
4. National Leader Project for this upcoming year is Mental Health Awareness. More information on this project will be available after the National Convention.

These are some of the programs, along with the other programs that the Department, requires will be our program projects for the year. I am asking for your help and assistance to promote these projects and programs. I am sure that we can get this done.

I will try to do my best and I will make some mistakes. I will try to answer your questions and concerns, and if I don’t know, I will find out the answer.

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

Dennis Sharp
Department Commander

Sr. Vice Commander’s Report

Rick Williamson

The State Convention is Deadwood is over, Mike’s Year as our Commander has come to an end. Our membership year is nearing the end also. We done well for the year however we have once again seen a decline due to the sad fact that more of our WWII and Korean veterans are answering their final call. We unfortunately have not been able to recruit into our ranks our Veterans who have served and earned their right to stand among our organization. If you know of a veteran who has served please let them know about us, or better yet let us know about them. We would love to welcome them home and to their local posts.

As we end the current year the membership numbers are as follows:

District#1 95.23% District#2 96.59% District#4 93.39%
District#6 91.63% District#7 94.74% District#8 93.56%
District#10 98.07% Department 95.51% Total Members 9277

We have seen a decline in membership of 440 members from June 2015 to June 2016. Let’s try to get back on track and try to make 2016-2017 a year of increase for membership. Thanks for all of your efforts during the last year, I know that Willy will be happy for your assistance in the next year.

Adjudant/Quartermaster’s Report

Rick W. Barg

We have completed another year of leadership in the VFW and we are continuing to be challenged with issues and concerns of serving our veterans and military service personnel.

This coming year we will face new challenges and I hope if you are an officer at the Post, District, Department or National level that you serve your fellow comrades at the highest level of Veterans of Foreign Wars standards. Please, Please, have your post pay the costs to send a Post officer to our leadership training in Pierre, on Saturday, September 26th, 2016 at our Fall Council and Commander’s and President’s Homecoming. You will receive some very necessary information to make your 2016-2017 VFW Year a very year.

We will be sending out the new membership program and putting it on our website very soon. There will be changes in qualifying requirements to become a member of the All-State Teams. Please take the time to read the new membership program for the 2016-2017 after you receive it.

This year, 6 Posts were quota busters same as last year, if that trend continues to happen we are in big trouble. We hope you have started to make plans for this year’s membership program so we can reach 100% in membership for 2016-2017. Our work is cut for us because over 300 comrades answered the last roll call. That’s a lot of new and reinstated comrades that will be needed next year to replace them. Membership was terrible this year we all need to support our post membership program better than we did last year.

There were several state by-laws that were approved to be change by the Convention Floor and will be forward to National for approval. Once the results are back from National the new By-Laws will forward to the posts.

You can go to our website at www.sdvfw.org and get your reporting information for community service, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Hospital and Safety, General Orders and 2016-2017 Membership Book. Commander Dennis has some different programs this year to increase the number memberships you have in your post. Please take the time to review these programs in your membership book.

If you have a veteran or a recent military member with some financial problems, and want information on phone cards or overseas phone cafes and want to plan a coming home or deployment event please contact Dale Jensen our State National Veterans and Military Support Chairman. Dale will give you the necessary information you will need to help these veterans.

Well, I had planned to step down this year from by position as Adjudant/Quartermaster, but that didn’t happen. If anyone is interested in this position, please contact Department Headquarters. This position needs to be filled.

ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER, continued on page 3
Jr. Vice Commander’s Report
Willie Page

As a member of the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars we are starting a new year of striving to achieve the 100% in membership. As the new Department Membership Chairman, decreases in membership the last few years makes it scary getting started with this year. Each Post and District needs to put some work into their new membership program. Thank you everyone that sent in the Community Service Report. There were some posts that did not send in any report at the end of the year. We are striving for one thing and that is Veterans helping Veterans. I would like to thank all members that supported me as your new State Jr. Vice Commander and I will do the best I can to get 100% in membership.

State Judge Advocate’s Report
Danny Frisby-Griffin

It is stunning to me how fast this year has gone. We made steady progress throughout the year in getting the Hospital and Safety Reports but there definitely seemed to be a lack of interest in turning the required 4th quarter reports. We only had 19 of our 62 posts submit the last quarter. That means there are posts not being recognized for the work they have been doing. For 2015-2016 reporting period; we had 37% QTR 1; 47% QTR 2, 45% Qtr 3 and 31% for QTR 4 (as of 5/31/2016).

With the information provided during the course of the year, the Department has turned in some incredible final year numbers. Once again, we have proven that we are “Remembering Our Promise” as we serve those that served.

Thank you for your support this year. If I can be of any assistance, feel free to contact me.

State Judge Advocate
Danny “Wham-O” Frisby-Griffin

State Surgeon’s Report
Sean Johnson

I wish to say thank you for electing me to the State Surgeons Post. I am excited to get to work. The first quarter has flown by fast. I will be collecting the Hospital and Safety Reports from your posts, please get them filled out and sent in as close to the end of the quarter as possible.

I want you to help me achieve better numbers for Commander Sharp.

Here are the numbers from last year. Let’s make it our goal to increase in each area. I have full confidence in our state and our ability to accomplish this goal.

Flowers: $4,472.13
Donations: $16,843.02
Volunteers: 2,462
Patients Visited 8,031
Volunteer Hours 17,278
Miles 87,079
Blood Unit $31,485
Cards $2,342.11
Total $465,947.66

If I can be of any assistance, don’t hesitate to contact me.

Sean Johnson, State Surgeon
seenjohnson@abe.midco.net

State Inspector Report
Ken Payne

Comrades,

It was nice to see so many in attendance at the State Convention in Deadwood. I want to thank Commander Mullen for appointing me Chief of Staff for last year. I thoroughly enjoyed it and want to welcome Gordon Paul to the position under Commander Sharp.

I am the new State Inspector and am also taking care of publications and newsletters. I would like to thank Commander Sharp for this appointment and hope that I can fill Tom Sherman’s shoes.

If your Post has a newsletter please put me on the mailing list. This is the only way that you can get into the running for the awards given on the state and national level. Post 7319 in Wagner won the national award in 2015, so don’t think that it can’t be done.

Post Quartermasters can also send the quarterly audits to me so that I can file them.

My address is:
Ken Payne
38486 252nd St., Plankinton, SD 57368
Home (605)942-7568
(you will probably have to leave a message)
E-mail k-e-n-p@hotmail.com

Ken Payne
State Inspector

2016-2017

My Responsibility to America

“The America I Believe In”
Department of South Dakota
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

2016-2017
3601 S. Minnesota, Sioux Falls, SD 57105
Phone: 605-332-7441, Fax: 605-332-0617, Email: vfwsd@aol.com
National Headquarters Front Desk: 816-756-3390
406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111

Overseas Veteran
completed by March 2017. The process is slow, but they
the new exhibits will be installed and that phase should be
and improved exhibits. After the remodeling is completed,
by fall. Work has begun on identifying and preparing new
vfwnationalhome.org

pull up the National Home web site and click on donate.
These are just a few ways to
for your donation. Y ou can also have a monthly donation
with a cost of $35.00. Another way is to buy a brick with your
support the National Home is to become a Life Member at
and no public funding for its existence. The best way to
not receive any tax dollars, no government appropriations
in the United States. A reminder that the National Home does
donate to the Home to honor her.
His grandmother grew up at the Home and he is certain
that her experiences at the Home helped to shape her into
the amazing woman she is. His grandmother has recently
interviewed. One of them was
acknowledged in the exhibit.

Several new supporters of the National Home were
recently interviewed. One of them was Brandon Hadley.
His grandmother grew up at the Home and he is certain
that experiences at the Home helped to shape her into
the amazing woman she is. His grandmother has recently
become ill and Brandon has deepened his involvement
with the Home to honor her.
Fortunately for the Home, Brandon’s definition of
family includes the extended family of VFW members and
military families in general. He has strong feelings about
their treatment.
First: He says it is normal for people to struggle with
the aftermath of war and families must be cared for in a
manner that doesn’t stigmatize them.
Second: Healing from war is a family problem and families
should be treated as a unit, as opposed to simply
treating the veteran. To have a place that can help keep
families together while they deal with the struggle of war
is important to everyone.
—NATL. HOME FOR CHILDREN, continued on page 11

VFW National Home for Children - June 2016
Fund Raising for the National Home:
This is important for the VFW National Home for Children to continue to function and grow in the way that would be expected. Many children depend on the home to provide a place to grow up, become educated and go out in life and become great citizens of the United States. A reminder that the National Home does not receive any tax dollars, no government appropriations and no public funding for its existence. The best way to support the National Home is to become a Life Member at a cost of $35.00. Another way is to buy a brick with your name on it. Of course, you can always just mail a check for your donation. You can also have a monthly donation by using your credit card. These are just a few ways to donate and there are many more. For help in deciding, just pull up the National Home web site and click on donate. Then decide which way you wish to help out. Give Now!
vfwnationalhome.org

Museum Project Update: Remodeling of the building started at the end of April, and it is hoped to be completed by fall. Work has begun on identifying and preparing new and improved exhibits. After the remodeling is completed, the new exhibits will be installed and that phase should be completed by March 2017. The process is slow, but they are excited to show it off in early 2017. They are looking for any interesting artifacts or photographs relating to when South Dakota had a house. If you happen to have something of interest, that item can be donated or put on loan, let them know. The Donor or Loaner would be acknowledged in the exhibit.

Spearhead National Home for Children
Second: Healing from war is a family problem and families should be treated as a unit, as opposed to simply treating the veteran. To have a place that can help keep families together while they deal with the struggle of war is important to everyone.
—NATL. HOME FOR CHILDREN, continued on page 11

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

Let us Never Forget Our Heroes
Memorial Day stands as a solemn American tradition that honors the sacrifices of past generations. Memorial Day is a day we dedicate to those who fell in defense of the ideals, beliefs, and values we hold sacred.
As a nation we need to remember these heroes and their sacrifice. We must remember what they did, why they did it, and appreciate what it means to us personally and as a nation.
America has been blessed as no other country in the history of the world. The sacrifices of our armed forces have given us the security and freedom in which to grow and flourish as a nation.
Remembering those sacrifices and what they have meant to our nation is the duty of the living.
That is why the ritual decorating of graves after the Civil War became so widespread so quickly. And with each successive generation came more wars. Hundreds of thousands more young American lives were lost on the battlefields and the concept of Memorial Day became a tradition renewed by each generation’s sacrifice.
Let us all enjoy the lives we lead because of the generations of young Americans who gave their lives so that all of us could live in freedom and prosperity. Let us continue to educate our children about the price paid for their freedom.
Our greatest duty to the men and women who have died in service to our country is to never, ever forget what they have done for each of us – and what they have done for us as a nation. They led colorful, vivid, and passionate lives and we owe it to them and their families to honor and pay tribute to their sacrifice.
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of South Dakota
Award Winners

Community Service Books – FIRST PLACE & Outstanding Community Service Award – Brookings, George Dokken Post 2118.
Hospital Award – FIRST PLACE, Category I – Parkston, Hutchinson County Post 3298; Parkston; Category II – Britton, Marshall Post 3507; Category III – Mitchell, Corn Palace City Post 2750; Category IV – Brookings, George Dokken Post 2118; Category V – Yankton, Ernest Owyer Post 791; Category VI – Rapid City Rushmore Post 1273.
Safety Awards – FIRST PLACE, Category I – Vermillion, Clay Post 3061; Category II – Webster southwest, Custer County Post 229; Category III – Hartford, Charles W. Kirke Post 3386; Category IV – Crow Creek, Charles Burns Post 631; Category V – Mitchell, Mitchell Post 2750; Category VI – Rapid City Rushmore Post 1273.
Post Poppy Awards – Posts, Largest Percentage increase, Sioux Falls, John bliss Post 628, Aberdeen, C.C. Croul Post 17. District Competition – Highest percentage of Posts purchasing and largest number increase in Poppies, District II.
Loyalty Day Awards – FIRST PLACE, Category I – Gettysburg, Winston M. Toomey Post 8630; Category II – Burke Post 9950; Category III – Mitchell, Corn Palace City Post 2750; Pierce, Charles E. Thorne Post 2038; Category V – Yankton, Ernest Bowyer Post 791.
Publications Newsletter Contest – FIRST PLACE (five or more times per year) – Sioux Falls, Jack Bliss Post 628; (five or less times per year) – FIRST PLACE, Fort Sisseton Post 3342; SECOND PLACE, Montgomery, Rollie Bucholz Post 7319; THIRD PLACE, Canton, Lincoln Post 3164.
First Quota Buster Post Award – Category I – Parkston, Hutchinson County Post 3298; Category II – Wagner, Rollie Bucholz Post 7319; Category III, Sturgis, Paha Sapa Post 2730; Brookings, George Dokken Post 2118; Custer, Kenneth Kuper Post 344.

Action Alert: Improve, Don’t Dismantle the VA Health Care System

Background: Politicians, pundits and politically-motivated organizations are using the national crisis in access to care at the Department of Veterans Affairs as justification to dismantle and privatize the VA health care system, with some even proposing that veterans be charged for their service-connected care. The VFW says no!

Veterans must not stand idle as politicians who never served or use the VA health care system dictate when and where veterans can receive care.

For almost 117 years, the VFW has worked tirelessly to identify issues veterans face when accessing their earned benefits, and has worked with Congress to ensure a grateful nation fulfills her obligation to those who sacrificed to defend her. In the past two years alone, the VFW has collected direct feedback from more than 20,000 veterans regarding their experiences receiving VA and private sector health care. Their message is clear: “Improve, don’t dismantle the VA health care system.”

Take Action: Contact your Members of Congress and let them know that VA health care reform must be based on the needs and preferences of veterans, not political rhetoric.

Take Action! http://capwiz.com/vfw/issues/alertid=72925626

Sarah Soldatke, VFW Post 628 Commander, receiving the membership recruiting pin from State Membership Chairman, Jr. Vice Commander Rick Williamson.

Signage in Deadwood Black Hills VFW Post 5969.
Special State Convention Highlights

Chaplain, Past State Commander Jerry Heggestad and Past State Commander, Donald Dahllin participating in the Memorial Service.

State Commander Mike M. Mullen accepting his Year in Review collage from Past Commander-in-Chief, Edward Banas.

Lyle Berg, District #4 Commander, recipient of the Service and Rehabilitation Award. (L-R): State Commander Mike M. Mullen and Lyle Berg, Webster VFW Post 4690.

Baker-Simpson Award was presented to Anthony S. Gonsor, the Outstanding Post Commander of the Year 2015-2016 and Captain of the All-State Team, Custer, VFW Post 3442. (L-R): Past Commander-in-Chief Edward S. Banas, Jr., Anthony S. Gonsor, and State Commander Mike M. Mullen.


Past State Commander Mike Mullen pinning the new Commanders Pin on newly installed State Commander Dennis Sharp during the 86th Annual Convention hosted by Sturgis Post 2730 in Deadwood.

State Commander Mike Mullen accepting the Silver Level Certificate of Recognition, Veterans & Military Support Programs for the Department of South Dakota from Past Commander-in-Chief Edward S. Banas. Also receiving a certificate-District’s #2 and #8 Posts - George Dokken Post 2118 Brookings; Black Hills Post 5969, Deadwood; Tomczak-Bartels Post 1776, Huron; Burke Post 9950, Rushmore; Post 1273, Rapid City.

All State Post Quartermasters Team

Jerry Steiner, Wagner VFW Post 7319; Edwin Serdlezy, Custer, VFW Post 3442; Dwight Griffie, Sturgis VFW Post 2730; Barbara McKeen, Parkston, VFW Post 3298; Darwin Tolzin, Brookings, VFW Post 2118.

All State Post Commanders Team

A prestigious 2016-2016 Award presented to Past State Commander Russel Dramstad of Huron, Tomczak-Bartels, VFW Post 1776, for his continuous support of all Veterans programs, Past National Council Member and National Legislative Committee member.

(L-R): National Past Commander-in-Chief, and Representative Edward S. Banas, recipient of the Double Eagle Award, Russel Dramstad, State Commander Mike M. Mullen.

Double Eagle Award

All State Post Commanders Team

All State Post Commanders Team - Roland Ennings, Sturgis VFW Post 2730; Anthony Gonzer, custer VFW Post 3442; Bill Hoffman, Parkston, VFW Post 3298; Anton Krcil, Wagner, VFW Post 7319; not in picture, John Gael, Brookings, VFW Post 2118.
God Bless America, entered by Winner Auxiliary #4674; it is under Category 3 Public Promotion. The wreath is, indeed, going on to National as well as the cross (also by Winner Auxiliary – Category Artistic & Decorative) that was used during the Memorial Service and a display by Gerry Dahlin – Category Inspirational & Memorial.

Buddy Poppy Display Competition

Eleanor Moleterno, recent Winner High School honor graduate, received first place in state competition in the VFW Auxiliary sponsored Young American Creative Patriotic Art contest for her pencil drawing titled “And…So I told My Buddy”. She received a $100.00 award from the SD State VFW Auxiliary at the state convention held in Deadwood. In addition, she also received the Connie (PDP) & Jerry Heggestad (PSC) award of $100.00.

While at convention, it was announced that Eleanor’s drawing placed 8th in the nation. She was among 48 entries in national completion. Eleanor will receive a $500.00 scholarship to be used at a school of her choice. She has decided to go to SDSU in Brookings for her higher education. Her entry will be on display with the other winning art work at the national convention in Charlotte, NC in July. Her entry, along with the other 48 entries is online at https://www.vfwauxiliary.org —See recipient’s comments on page 11

Department of South Dakota Auxiliary
Creative Art Contest Winner

(L-R): Eleanor’s parents, Eleanor Moleterno, Sandi Moss, Creative Art Aux. Chairman; State Chaplain Jerry and Past State Auxiliary President Connie Heggestad; State Auxiliary President, Nancy Worth.

Firefighter of the Year

Tim Behlings, Sponsored by the Custer, Kenneth Kuper VFW Post 3442.
(L-R): State Commander Mike Mullen; Sr. Vice Commander Dennis Sharp; Recipient Tim Behlings

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

J. Edgar Hoover Gold Medal Award

Mark Chamberlain, Sponsored by the Aberdeen C.C. Croal VFW 17.
(L-R): State Commander Mike Mullen; State Sr. Vice Commander Dennis Sharp; Recipient Mark Chamberlain

EMT, Emergency Medical Service of the Year

Amy Marsh, Sponsored by the Sioux Falls, John M. Bliss VFW Post 628.
(L-R): State Commander Mike Mullen; Sr. Vice Commander Dennis Sharp; Recipient Amy Marsh.

Boy Scout of the Year

2015-2016

Alexander Palecek, recipient of the Boy Scout of the Year Award 2015-2016, by State Commander Mike Mullen. Alexander was Sponsored by Yankton VFW Post 791 and Auxiliary.
—See recipient’s comments on page 11

Outstanding Participation Certificate

Nelda Jorgenson receiving the Outstanding Participation Certificate as Auxiliary-Americanism Chairman.

FIRST PLACE
Membership Category #4
(226-Over)
Winner Auxiliary Post 4674

(L-R): State Auxiliary President, Nancy Worth; Sandy Van Kekezie; National Representative Jan Owens

Past Chief of Staff Kenneth Payne turning over the equipment to the new Chief of Staff Gordon Paul.
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

I wish to thank everyone for his or her support in electing me as SD VFW Auxiliary President for 2016-2017. It is indeed an honor, and I hope to do you proud and make this coming year a banner year for the SD Auxiliary.

My theme is: NOW IS THE TIME with a tagline of Family: Support, Serve, Honor and Respect. It is time for Auxiliary family members to renew and refresh our support and service to all veterans and active military with honor and respect. My priority goal this year is to achieve a minimum of 100% Plus One in membership — NOW IS THE TIME. In addition to other monetary awards for membership, 100% Plus One will mean a $1,000 award to the Department, which will be a tremendous help in carrying out our obligations and programs.

I’m looking forward to the National Convention in Charlotte, NC.

I’m available to everyone to offer assistance and help answer questions, so do not hesitate to contact me.

Auxiliary Sr. Vice President’s Report

Carrie Alm

Here we go again! Another exciting year ahead of us full of opportunities to support our veterans and their families! I look forward to assisting everyone with their goals as individuals, auxiliaries, districts and our Department. By the time you will be reading this, we will have return from National Convention in Charlotte, NC full of new ideas and information to share with you at our 2nd Annual VFW Auxiliary Retreat in Greenvile, SD. We will be meeting at the Roost Resort from August 18-21, 2016. Arrival time on Thursday the 18th at 12 noon. (Please, no early arrivals). Departure will be Sunday the 21st mid-morning. Come for some of it, please, but definitely if you are a program chairman they read. I would encourage everyone to take a glance at it, but definitely if you are a program chairman they should offer you good information about your program. Also, make sure to watch for bulletins from Department Chairman in General Orders that will assist you with planning and keeping up with your year's activities.

Our youth really are our future. Whether they are the future of our military or the future of our Auxiliaries, they are who we need to rely on for future success. Please keep them in mind when organizing activities that would be good learning experiences for them and also when needing some volunteerism help. The only way they grow up learning true patriotism is by being a part of it in their formative years. I have been shown this over and over by the positive response we have from you in my local auxiliary.

I look forward to our year ahead and continuing to positively support our Veterans and their families. I am here to assist you with any questions you may have. Please call me at 605-517-0287.

Loyally,
Carrie Alm
Department Senior Vice President

Auxiliary Jr. Vice President’s Report

Mary Kirkvold

Membership Ambassador for this year is, Leona Mc Dermatt, she is from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

National will be sending out the new Membership dues cards in July. It would be nice if everyone would pay their dues, when they receive their notice. National will be discussing when they receive their notice. Everyone would pay their dues, cards in July. It would be nice if all members and Life members, which included raising Life Membership dues. The break down is in the May issue of VFW Auxiliary.

For example, if you are age 31-35, currently the amount is, $190.00, after January 1, 2017, the amount will be $300.00. If you are thinking of going Life, I would suggest you do so before January 1st. As you know, as of August 21, 2015, men are able to join our Auxiliary, the same criteria as when we joined. You’ve read this before, however, I would like to bring it up again. Must be a citizen of the United States or a United States National, and at least 16 years of age.

Those eligible are:

Widower/Widow
Grandfather/Grandmother
Grandson/Granddaughter
Son/Daughter
Brother/Sister
Step-Siblings/Step Parents/Step-Children

We are fortunate that at our VFW Post the public are welcome. In other states or communities, you must be a member to enter or have a member sign you in.

Mary Kirkvold
Department Membership Chairman 2016-2017

Pictured (with years of membership), (Back row, L-R): Betty English, 57 years; Joan Brunckow, 56 years; Clarine Black, 58 years; Dorothy Berger, 54 years; Norma Storms, 58 years and Connie Steinke, 50 years. (Front row, L-R): Adeline Vavra, 58 years; Margaret Legge, 58 years; Longevity Queen is Marian Jorgensen and Violet Kaiser, 50 years.
Good morning — VFW Past Natl. Commander Edward Banas, VFW Aux. Natl. Secretary/Treasurer Jan Owen, Commander Dennis, VFW Officers, VFW Aux. Officers and all VFW and Aux. members in attendance and a special thank you to our family for being here with Dennis and I for this day.

Thank you for your support in electing me as SD VFW Aux. President for 2016-2017. It has been some time in coming, but as Commander Dennis said, “Tomorrow Is Today,” and “Now Is The Time” for Auxiliary members, as family, to renew and refresh our support and service to all veterans, active military, and their families with honor and respect. My priority goal for this year is to achieve a minimum of 100% Plus 1 membership, which will make the Auxiliary stronger, better and more active. With males now being able to join the Auxiliary, we have an opportunity unlike any before...so “Now Is The Time.” When we get new members, we need to listen to their wants and needs, or we’ll lose them. We also cannot forget our present members. Their knowledge and mentorship are of a value that cannot be measured. We need to promote the auxiliary with enthusiasm and pride, so we can grow and better support and serve our veterans and active military and have a great time doing it.

I will be available whenever to answer any questions or concerns or I’ll get them answered, and I, with your help, will strive to make this coming year the best it can be for the South Dakota VFW and Auxiliary.

NOW IS THE TIME – so let’s get to it! Thank you.
Outstanding Presidents, Membership – FIRST PLACE Category #1 10-50, Clarice, Alcester; Category #2 51-110, Myrna Bell, Milbank; Category #3, III-225, Wanda Mix, Brookings; Category #4, 246+, Sandy Van Keerkert. Membership Awards to: Elk Point, Canton; Freeman, Sioux Falls; Brookings; Madison; Brandon; Milbank; Goodwin; Scotland; Plankinton; Winner: Burg: Belle Fourche; Custer; Deadwood; Quinn. Membership – Greatest Numerical increase, Winner with +11; Greatest Percent increase, Goodwin, 113%; District with Greatest Percent, District #2 with 110.0%. Auxiliary with most new Mail Members, Custer, with 8 members. Posts for greatest percentages – 10-50, Goodwin, with 113.79%; Patti Mitchell; 111+; Winner; 103.04% Sandra Van Keerkert. Most Numerical Gain, Winner Veterans and Family Support Certificates – Brookings; Canton; Beresford; Deadwood; Rapid City; Custer; Pierre; Sioux Falls; Goodwin Awards for Buddy Poppies drive – First Place, Belle Fourche; Second Place, Goodwin; Third Place, Plankinton Past Presidents Awards – Best Overall Program, Aberdeen, Nelda Jorgenson; best Promotion of Unmet Needs, Faulkton, Beverly Hanson; Best Overall Promotion by membership group, 10-50, Goodwin, Patti Mitchell; 51-110, Milbank, Murna Bell; 111-225, Brookings, Mary Wilberg; 225+ Kathy Reddy; Buddy Poppy distribution, Belle Fourche Americanism, Overall Patriotism Promotion, 10-50, Eureka, Connie Jung; 51-110, Beresford, Marion Newworth; 111-225, Aberdeen, Sheryl Ruckman and 2nd, Spearfish, Carol Hess 225+ Winner, Jan Endes; Best Promotion of Patriotism specializing in youth program – Beresford, Overall, 10-50, Belle Fourche, Pat Ruzecka; 51-100, Plankinton, Donna Shafer; 111-225, Brookings, Jan Olson; 225+, Pierre, Deb Fahey; Hospital – Best Event sponsoring for hospitalized veterans. Winner, Connie Heggestad; Suicide Awareness, Winner, Connie Heggestad; Nursing Home, Winner, Connie Heggestad. Best Overall – 10-50, Eureka; 110-110, Britton; 111-225, Auctioneer, 226+, Winner; Scholarships – Department winners: 1st Place, Winner; 2nd Place, Madison; 3rd Place, Brookings. Best Promotion of VOD and PP program – 10-50, Lemmon, Sharon Crevier; 51-110, Canton, Sharon Mitchell; 111-225, Redfield, Mildred Rategan; 225+, Pierre, Eileen Kramer. Creative Art Program – 10-50, None qualified; 51-110, Beresford, Bernadine Field; 110-225, None Qualified; 226+ Winner, Rosemary Connot. Award for entry in Young American Creative Art Program – Winner, Rosemary Connot; Brookings, Lois Ladegaard; Custer, Zoe Yellin; Madison, Imogene Ellis. Report from District #4, Gloria Fortin; District #10, Kay Rypinski. Best Promotion of the VOD and PP – Madison, Imogene Ellis. Continuing Education Scholarship and Young American Creative Art Contest – Brookings, Lois Ladegaard. Legislative. Most members communicating with legislators on Veterans issues – Rapid City. Most members subscribing to Check Point – Brookings. Best promotion of Legislative Goals – 1st Place, Rapid City, 2nd Place, Yankton. Best for members community with legislators – 1st Place, Brookings; 2nd Place, Custer. Best Overall, Rapid City, Sandy Moss Publicity – informing their auxiliary or revitalizing their auxiliary- Brookings. National Keepsake Award who assists in revitalizing her auxiliary and who uses the Healthy Auxiliary materials – Brookings, Lois Ladegaard Buddy Poppy Apparel Parade – 1st Place, Beresford; 2nd Place, Goodwin, 3rd Place, Faulton; 4th Place, Sioux Falls. Public Promotion to Korean War by Gerri Dahlin; Artistic and Decorative, Connie Heggestad; Inspirational and Memorial to Cross, Connie Heggestad; Program most advertised, Belle Fourche National Awards – Veterans & Family Support, Patti Mitchell; Americanism, Nelda Jorgenson; Hospital, Leanne Payne; Legislative, Tammy Chase; Scholarship, Sandi Moss; Youth, Mary Kirvold Local News Paper Fund Raiser Auction Auction of paper, signed by head table was by auctioneer Jr. Vice Commander Rich Williamson for $249.00. Monies collected for sales the paper was $411.00. Sioux Falls VFW Post always matches up to $500.00 for a total of 1151.00 to be presented to the “Honor and Remember” Founder, Ms. Christine Bestgen, for assisting with purchase of additional banners. Gold Star Family Christine Bestgen She explained a Gold Star Family is a family who has lost a loved one in Active Duty Military Service to our country. They are selling Hostas as a fund raiser to purchase “Honor and Remember Flags” to Gold Star Families in South Dakota and Wyoming. For more information on their fund raisers and on Honor and Remember, visit honorandremember.org or email igoldstarmother@gmail.com Pictured left to right: State Commander Mike Mullen, Speaker Christine Bestgen, State Auxiliary President Nancy Worth Head table at the Gold Star Mother Auxiliary to Veterans of Foreign Wars Dept. of South Dakota “Recognition Luncheon” 2016. (L-R): Mary Kirkvold; Emogene Ellis; Jan Endes; Auxiliary National Representative, Jan Owns; State President, Nancy Worth and Carrie Alm. "...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! Sharpie, VFW Post 2720 Dzane, Robert D., USA, National Guard, Life Colton, Al Brookings, VFW Post 2118 Klemmensen, Jerome E., USA, Life Wagner, VFW Post 7319 Burres, Vernon, USA, Life Yankton, VFW Post 791 Shabers, Leonard, WWII, USA, Life Amras, Frank, Korea, USA Allen, Elbert, WWII, USA, Life McNeil, Aron, Korea, USA, Life Moore, Robert, WWII, USA, Life Gagner, Arthur, WWII, USA, Life Gibson, Frank, Vietnam, USA Alexander, Eugene, WWII, USA, Life Schaeffer, Marvin, WWII, USA, Life McDonald, Doyle, Vietnam, USA Sommer, Alvin, Korea, USA, Life Basham, Paul, WWII, USA, Life Huron, VFW Post 1778 Bertsch, Wilbert, WWII, USA, Life Sevenstad, Leo, USA, Korea Gambrel, LeRoy L., Korea, USA Nordby, Earl, D., USA, Life Watertown, VFW Post 791 Phisio, Julian, Korea, USA Kruthoff, Marvin B., Korea, USA Lambert, Roland M., Vietnam, USA, Life Alten, David A., Berlin Oper, USA, Life Barthel, Frank J., WWII, USA, Life Nies, Leroy M., Korea, USA, Life Lang, Eugene C., WWII, USA, Life Alcester, VFW Post 6149 Johnson, Mahlon, USA, Life Hendrickx, Robert J., WWII, USA, Life Rapid City, VFW Post 1273 Syversen, Phil, WWII, USMC, Life Baker, Harold, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Jackson, Merlin, WWII, USA, Life Burgess, Barry, Korea, USA/A, Life Gilen, Joseph, WWII, USA, Life Klundt, Wayne, Vietnam, USA, Life Madison, VFW Post 2638 Stanford, Gene, WWII, USA, Life Filling, Dwayne, WWII, USA, Life Olson, Orville, WWII, USA, Life Sioux Falls, VFW Post 623 Dietz, Gary, Vietnam, USA, Life Herron, James, Vietnam, USA, Life Hyllestorm, Harris, Korea, USA Lungs, Frank, WWII, Life Hoffman, Donald, Korea, USA/A, Life Knox, John, Vietnam, USA, Life Somrak, Lee, Korea, USA, Life Rensch, Kenneth, Korea, USA Jenson, Donald, Korea, USA Kids, Alvin, Korea, USA, Life Past Post Cmdr Peterson, Russell, WWII, USA, Life Van Rongmey, Peter, WWII, USA, Life Haller, Davaye, Korea, USA, Life Lewis, John B., WWII, USA Gabrielsson, Dwayne, Korea, USA Jochlin, Lee, WWII, USA, Life Forsd, Laurence, Vietnam, Vietnam, USA McBride, Roy, Korea, USA, Life Grapentine, Richard, Korea, USA Haugen, Raymond, WWII, USA, Life Wilson, Darrem, Vietnam, USA, Life Alderson, WWII, USA, Life Friesel, Ronald, WWII, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snook, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, W VW/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life Tegly, Roy, WWII/Korea, USMC, Life Johnson, Howard, WWII/Korea, USA, Life Snyder, Matt, WWII, USA, Life Sand, Harold, WWII, USA, Life
OVERSEAS VETERAN
Contact: Tony Venhuizen or Kelsey Pritchard at 605-773-3212

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August of 2018.

Construction for the USS South Dakota will begin in 2016. The submarine is expected to be complete in 2021, which will support a crew of 130 sailors. The company has been building submarines since 1899 when it was founded by General Dynamics Electric Boat.

PIERRE, S.D. – Lt. Gov. Matt Michels today visited the Connecticut facility where the USS South Dakota is being built.

Lt. Governor Visits Electric Boat Facility To Discuss Plans
For USS South Dakota

PIERRE, S.D. – Lt. Gov. Matt Michels today visited the Connecticut facility where the USS South Dakota (SSN 790) will be built. At the facility, Michels toured the recently commissioned USS Illinois and met with the ship commander, the chief of the boat and the ship manager who is overseeing construction of the USS South Dakota.

“The USS South Dakota BB-57 was the most decorated warship of World War II. With the construction of the SSN 790, we’re moving the history of the USS South Dakota forward to protect our nation,” said Lt. Gov. Michels.

General Dynamics Electric Boat is building the multi-mission nuclear powered Virginia class submarine which will support a crew of 130 sailors. The company has been building submarines since 1899 when it assembled the U.S. Navy’s first commissioned undersea warship, the USS Holland.

Construction for the USS South Dakota will begin in 2016. The submarine is expected to be complete in August of 2021.
PAST VFW DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS

STATE FAIR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS WANTED to drive the golf carts. Not just on Veterans Day, but for the entire week. Start at 8am until noon, noon to 3pm and 3pm until we are done. (25 carts—three shifts—five days) In need of a lot of volunteers. Fair entry is free as long as your name is posted, etc. If interested, please contact Bev Freng, Coordinator at: email: dickorbevfrentg@santel.net or call (605) 352-5997 and leave a message.

“AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS

State Website: www.sdvfw.org               Deadline Date: May 15, 2017

3601 S. Minnesota Ave.
City: _____________________________ State: ___ Zip Code: _____________
Address: ________________________________________________________
Name: __________________________________________________________

Please complete this form:

You must complete the following form and send it to Department Headquarters by the deadline is Sept. 1, 2016.

Overseas Veteran Option

At this year’s Department Convention held in Deadwood it was voted to have the Overseas Veteran to be posted on the State VFW website. Those members who would like to continue to receive it by mail may still do so.

You must complete the following form and send it to Department Headquarters by May 15, 2017. If we have not received your information by May 15, 2017 we will no longer receive the Overseas Veteran by mail.

Please complete this form:

Name: _____________________________
Address: ________________________________________________________
City: _____________________________ State: ___ Zip Code: _____________
Mail to: South Dakota VFW Headquarters
3601 S. Minnesota Ave.
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57105
State Website: www.sdvfw.org
Deadline Date: May 15, 2017

DEADLINE

For the next issue (Oct. 2016) of the South Dakota Overseas Veteran, the deadline is Sept. 1, 2016. Please submit your articles by that date. Send to: Editor Dick L. Pickering, 404 Dogwood Street, Brandon, SD 57005. Or email them to: dpsigns@alliancecom.net

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 donation 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: Jerry and Connie Heggestad; Bruce Howell; Donald and Gerri Dahlin VFW Post 9595-Blackie; Vern and Norma Hansen; Mike Mullen and Nancy Worth; Tom and Becky Haffner; Jacqueline L. Simonsen; Jonathan Thorburn; VFW Post 1776-Huron; Russel Dramstad; Rick and Marva Bang; Henry Whitney, and Darwin G. Teisser; Gary and Lois Knudson; Mike Boza; Earl and Betty Boza. In the Silver category, Lyle L. Berg; Dick Pickering.

POST SCHEDULES

John M. Bliss
Post #628
9 am - 10 pm, Mon.-Thurs.
9 am - 2 pm Fri. & Sat.
Lunch served 11 am - 1:30 pm, M-Fri.
Dinner specials every Fri. & Sat., 5-8 pm
Book your wedding reception with us!
Call 605-338-9741
Follow us on Facebook at VFW Post 628
www.vfw628.com
Serving the Sioux Empire since 1911

Brookings
George Dokken
Post #2118
Bingo: Mon.; Thurs. and Fri.
Lounge: Bingo nights & Sat.
Hall: Available for rental
520 Main Avenue
605-692-6771

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. to 8:00 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
Post #4726
Brandon, SD
(The most eastern Post in SD)
Intercity 90, Exit 406
Post Meeting, 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.,
Auxiliary Meeting, 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
Welcome Veterans & Friends to Our Freedom Grill
and Bar Lounge.

Ernest Bowyer
Post No. 791
209 Cedar St.
Yankton, SD
(605) 665-3562
Open 3 p.m., Sun., thru Sat.
All Veterans and Visiting Members Welcome
Meeting Night 2nd Tuesday

Rushmore - Post #1273
423 Main St., Rapid City, SD 57701
PHONE: 342-9904
Meeting Nights
MOC/MOCA Post 2730 Auxiliary
423 Main St., Rapid City, SD
Open Mon. thru Thur. 11 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday 11 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Saturday 12:00 till 2:00 a.m.
All Veterans and visiting members welcome

Sturgis Veterans’ Club
868 Main Street
Sturgis, SD
605-347-4682
Open 3 p.m.
Monday Night Family Dinner Starting at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Friday Night Fish Fry Starting at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Short orders & dinners available

Kenneth Kuper
Post #3442
721 Mt. Rushmore Rd.
Custer, SD
605-673-4282
Lounge Opens 2pm
Post & Auxiliary Meetings
Third Thursday - 7pm
Visit us on your trip to the Hills