



THE SOUTH DAKOTA **LEGIONETTE**

Serving Veterans, their Families and their Communities

A Word from the President

by Jane Benzel, Department President



"Joining Together for Our Veterans"

Happy December! My where has the year gone? I hope you all had a wonderful Veterans Day honoring our veterans and a thankful Thanksgiving. As I am writing this newsletter, we are now half finished with our Christmas Gift Shops. If you have not attended one, I encourage you to try. This is a very rewarding time. The veterans are so grateful! Next it will be Christmas parties, time to add some joy to our veterans' lives. Christmas can be a very hard time for them, as many are homeless, jobless, or without family. Thank you to all the units that have donated or sent care packages to our deployed military.

I hope all of you turned in your mid-year reports. I know you are doing wonderful things for our veterans. National will use your input when giving their reports at the Washington Conference in February.

I hope many of you have your calendar marked to go to Mid-Winter Conference February 12-14th. It should be a great time and hopefully you will learn lots. Judy Twete, our Northwest National Vice President will be our guest speaker. I plan on having an informal "Baby Shower" banquet on Saturday, As you know, the women's wing of the Sioux Falls VA is my president's project this year.

(Cont. page 3)

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) by *Dept. Chairman Melanie Martens*

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation is the oldest program of the Auxiliary. Since World War I, the women of the American Legion Auxiliary have taken an active role in the care and rehabilitation of veterans. By the end of World War II it was determined that a need existed to coordinate volunteer efforts. On April 8th 1946, the Veterans Administration developed and formed the first VAVS (Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service) Advisory Committee. American Legion Auxiliary members are known across the country as a go-to-resource for this country's veterans and their families. The Auxiliary membership is proud of its legacy of volunteer service, and it is our goal to continue our valuable contribution in the years to come. Caring for our veterans is at the core of the American Legion Auxiliary mission. We have a proud tradition to maintain.

What can your unit or members do to ensure that the VA&R program has the volunteer resources it needs to get the job done?

During Mid-Winter I will be conducting an Orientation Class for Service to Veterans for those that are interested in learning more about opportunities to serve our veterans outside of the VA facilities. The class will be designed to help us all have a better understanding of the level of service we give to our veterans and new volunteer opportunities. This program reflects our care, commitment, and compassion for our veterans. (Cont. page 3)

PICTURES IN THE E-LEGIONETTE

Kick-off was Veterans Day in Hot Springs

Veterans' Holiday Relief Drive

Benefiting homeless and at-risk Veterans and Military Families

HOSTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary
and
Autumn Simunek ~ Miss South Dakota

Contribute "Buddy Basket(s)"

Home-Warming Welcome Recipe: Assemble a Laundry Basket/Waste Basket filled with:

Paper Towels - Laundry Detergent - Household Cleansers - Rubber Gloves - Cleaning Sponges - Dust Pan w/Hand Brush - Light Bulbs - Flashlight - Batteries - Shower Curtain wrings - Bath Towel Set - Bathroom Tissue - Dishes - Eating Utensils - Dish Soap - Dish Towel Set - *Prosted with clear wrap/bow and greeting tag/card*

Substitute or Single Household and Essential Items Welcome

Bed Sheets, Pillows, Blankets, and Sleeping Bags (all sizes) - Small Appliances, Alarm Clocks, etc. -

Hygiene Products - Warm Apparel and Socks (all sizes) - Shopping Gift Cards

Monetary Donations: Checks payable & mailed to:
SD American Legion Auxiliary, Attn: Vets Relief Drive
129 North Main Avenue • Hartford, SD 57033



SOUTH DAKOTA DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

November 11, 2015 - January 15, 2016

- *Vermillion - The Broadcaster/Plain Talk • 201 W Cherry Str.; Main Street Center • 320 West Main Str.
- *Sioux Falls - American Legion Post 15 • 1701 W Legion Drive; Berakhah House • 400 N Western Ave.
- *Mitchell - American Legion Post 18 • 107 N Main Street
- *Hot Springs - American Legion Post 71 • 1045 Jennings Avenue
- *Rapid City - American Legion Post 22 • 818 E St. Patrick Str.; The Cornerstone Rescue Mission • 30 Main Str.
- *Sturgis - Chamber of Commerce • 2040 Junction Avenue
- *Deadwood - Chamber of Commerce • 767 Main Street; Lawrence County Admin. Bldg. Lobby • 90 Sherman Str.;
- *Spearfish - Area Chamber of Commerce • 106 W Kansas Str.; Black Hills Pioneer • 315 Seaton Circle
Black Hills State University • School of Education - Jonas 203A

Thank you for contributing to South Dakota's Veteran Outreach Centers to assist our military heroes and their families!
Additional Information: Autumn.Simunek@misssd.org 605.890.3093

In Memoriam

Unit 3 Chamberlain, K Cook— May 2015; **Unit 7 Huron**, Ruth Namanny— Oct. 2015; **Unit 16 Gann Valley**, Ellen M. Hall— Oct. 2015; **Unit 21 Hurley**, Charlotte Heidelberger—Sept. 2015; **Unit 25 Madison**, Ernestine Johnson—Sept. 2015, Janet Reynolds—Oct. 2015; **Unit 38 Miller**, Barbara Bouren—Oct. 2015, Linelle Mason—Oct. 2015, Marilyn Meehan—Oct. 2015; **Unit 41 Alexandria**, Martha Davis—Feb. 2015, Darlene Peterson—Aug. 2015, Gladys Schleich—Jan. 2015; **Unit 42 Arlington**, Gwen Merrifield—Oct. 2015, Inola Weiland—Oct. 2015; **Unit 47 Artesian**, Agatha Ebersdorfer—Oct. 2015, **Unit 52 Armour**, Mabel Clark—Jan. 2015; **Unit 53 Canton**, Carolyn Porter – Sept. 2015; **Unit 56 Geddes**, Darlene Raysby – Oct. 2015, Leone Sejnoha – Oct. 2015; **Unit 60 Clark**, Betty Marx – July 2014; **Unit 65 Dell Rapids**, Betty Begansky – Oct. 2015; **Unit 72 Beresford**, Ardis Thormodsgaard – Aug. 2015; **Unit 74 Brookings**, Charleen Forsyth – Oct. 2015; **Unit 94 White River**, Elaine Hight – July 2015; **Unit 102 Faulkton**, Mrs. Cameron – Apr. 2015, Rosalia Schmidt – June 2015, Doris Wescett – Oct. 2015; **Unit 109 Gary**, Darlene Koerlin – Spt. 2015; **Unit 118 Hartford**, Doris Jordan – July 2015, Bonnie Oberle – Aug. 2015; **Unit 132 Springfield**, Connie Allen – Aug. 2015; **Unit 138 De Smet**, Frances Smith – Nov. 2015; **Unit 150 Avon**, Ruth Dykstra – May 2015, May Oorlog – 2015, Clarice Reiff – 2014, Eileen Skelton – Nov. 2014, Polly Sternhagen – Jan. 2015; **Unit 164 Spearfish**, Eileen Schuttler – Sept. 2015; **Unit 169 Winner**, Phyllis Bolton – Oct. 2015, Lee Lichart – Oct. 2015, Donna Trego – Oct. 2015; **Unit 176 Davis**, Janet Fletcher – Aug. 2015; **Unit 177 Worthing**, Marjorie Lounsbery – Jan. 2015; **Unit 186 Eureka**, Edna Chase – Dec. 2014; **Unit 187 Fairfax**, Patricia Koenig – Oct. 2015; **Unit 191 Eagle Butte**, Betty Deane – Sept. 2015; **Unit 207 Stratford**, Phyllis Saunders – June 2015; **Unit 229 Big Stone City**, Lorraine Schnaer – Sept. 2015; **Unit 240 Martin**, Dorene Ziemann – Aug. 2015; **Unit 255 Bison**, Jeanette Kolb – July 2015; **Unit 267 Grenville**, Victoria Jaskulka – Aug. 2015; **Unit 271 Agar**, Carol Marsh – July 2015; **Unit 272 Pollock**, Elsie Ryckman – Sept. 2015; **Unit 289 Mansfield**, Alfreda Nash – July 2015

ADVANCE TICKET FORM

American Legion Auxiliary – Saturday, February 13, 2016

Deadline to order tickets is JANUARY 29, 2016

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____

Auxiliary Luncheon, Saturday, February 13, 2016 – NOON

Menu: PICNIC BUFFET – Fried Chicken, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Pickle Spears, and Breads.

Number of tickets _____ x \$15.00 per ticket = \$ _____

Auxiliary Banquet, Saturday, February 13 2016– 6:30 PM

Menu: Roasted Pork Loin with Marsala Mushroom Gravy, Salad, Vegetable, Potato, Dinner Rolls, Coffee and Water

Number of tickets _____ x \$20.00 per ticket = \$ _____

TOTAL amount enclosed for Saturday Luncheon and/or Auxiliary Banquet \$ _____

() Check box for special dietary needs

Make checks payable to: ALA Unit #7

Send To: Jeanette Johnson

NO TICKETS WILL BE

360 20th St. SE, Huron, SD 57350

AVAILABLE AT THE EVENT!!!

2016 Mid-Winter Conference Joint Banquet

Huron Crossroads Convention Center February 12, 2016

Hosted by The American Legion Post # 7 – Huron

Deadline to order tickets is JANUARY 29, 2016

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____

MENU: Roast Beef, Battered Cod, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, Tossed Salad, Macaroni & Pea Salad, Cookies & Cream Salad, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Water

Number of tickets _____ x \$27.00 per ticket = \$ _____

SEND TO: Post 7 Attn. Jerry Mencke, 1829 Dexter Ct., Huron, South Dakota 57350

NO TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE EVENT!



Just a little **REMINDER** to submit your poppy orders. The Vets in the Hot Springs VA are working enthusiastically to get 'er done! Good luck with your veterans and poppy projects and let's see those orders!

ALA SD Girls State Journalism

by Cheryl Hovorka, Director/Chairman

The DEADLINE for the ALA SD Girls State Journalism City is FEBRUARY 1, 2016! Please contact the schools to see if they may have someone that would be interested in Journalism City even though the school may not have a school newspaper. The acceptance letters for Journalism City will be mailed out by FEBRUARY 21, 2016. The reason for the February deadline is if the girl does not get selected for Journalism City she can still apply for the regular session.

The Journalism City application process is the same as in the past. The application forms were mailed to the Unit Presidents in the October Department mailing. If you do not have a form, please contact me and one will be provided.

To increase the interest, we are making some modifications to Journalism City for the 2016 session. The applicants will still need to complete the application form as well as provide a letter of recommendation and samples of a news story, a feature and or an editorial. If they are on staff with the school newspaper, they should include a copy of that as well.

The goal is to accept fourteen girls in Journalism City but each girl will also be assigned to a regular city so that she can sign petitions, vote by computer, etc. and be involved in various activities throughout the week. She won't be able to run for any

offices as her primary objective for the week will be to produce the *Sacajawea Scroll*. But by being part of a city it will give the girls a broader Girls State experience.

We will also be adding a lunch/roundtable discussion for the Journalism City delegates. Each day Tuesday through Friday a different source of the media will be invited to join the girls for lunch such as radio, TV, newspaper and magazine. It will give the girls a chance to network with professional staff in each of those areas.

As noted in my ALA SD Girls State Fall bulletin we will be moving to an online registration process. Complete instructions on this will be included in the application packets that will be sent out the middle of January. Unless we received the Unit Data Form to inform us who is to receive the packet, the packet will automatically be mailed to the Unit President. So if it is to be mailed to someone other than the President, you need to let me know ASAP.

This year the Samsung application is also moving to an on line registration and more information will also be included in the application packets.

We have lots of new and exciting things planned for the 2016 session and we need your help to contact those delegates so we can have a record breaking attendance!

"Joining Together for Our Veterans"

Cont. from page 1.

They have many pregnant veterans there. I would like each attendee, if possible, to bring a plain "onesie" if possible, and material markers if you have them, and we will decorate them to send to the young mothers for their little ones from the ALA. I will have some available if you aren't able to bring these items. It should be a lot of fun! We also plan to make magnetic auxiliary patches.

I am very proud of South Dakota for their work towards the Centennial Strategic Plan. I continue to see Branding, Civility, and Leadership! Membership is doing great, even with all the problems getting started. Keep up the good work. Don't forget to be collecting those items for the silent auction!

From my home to yours, I wish you a very blessed Christmas season!

*In a Culture of
Good Will*

Jane Benzel



Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation by Dept. Chairman

Melanie Martens (Cont. from page 1.)

Again this year we are reminded to raise awareness of the number of homeless veterans, especially women veterans and those with children. They are quickly becoming a very large segment of the veteran population and we need to be there for them in their time of need. Perhaps you could host or volunteer at one of your local stand downs. Another idea would be to check with a local post chairman or a homeless coordinator at the VA to offer help by providing food, clothing, or financial assistance to a family.

Another objective for this year is the Quilts of Valor program. This is an excellent way for you to serve our veterans from the comfort of your home. Even if you aren't a quilter you can find someone that is and donate materials for those that do quilting in your unit. Information on this program is at www.qovf.org. We are again collecting flip flops for the VA facilities during Mid-Winter; they have requested the larger sizes this time. Along with the flip flops don't forget to bring the travel size soaps, lotions, shampoos, conditioners or other personal care items. Junior and Senior members are going to be assembling hygiene kits for the homeless shelters; this should be a fun project to do together!

I am sure by now that you have all been able to send in your donations for the Christmas Gifts shops. I am looking forward to helping out during the Christmas Gift Shops and Parties at the VA facilities. Remember, you are welcome to attend any of the Gift Shops or Christmas Parties; the veterans always appreciate the time you spend with them.

Please make sure to record and track the hours, dollars and number of veterans that have been impacted by your service. The assistance that you give to your veteran friend or neighbor are hours that can be reported.

December Prayer
By Sharon Broghammer -
Dept. Chaplain

Matthew 1:23: *Behold the Virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call him Emmanuel, which is interpreted "God With Us"*

May the Spirit of Jesus dwell in the hearts of every troop this day and always and may Your Name be glorified in each life.

Lord, grant these brave veterans and soldiers your perfect peace as they serve their country. Lord give strength and assistance to all those, who await their loved ones at home, knowing you'll bring peace and contentment to them through the holiday season in Jesus' name amen.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the veterans, serviceman, and auxiliary ladies this season.

Give 10 to Education & National Education Week



Deanna Lundgren from Elkton Unit 198 with her certificate for Give 10 to Education— The staff at Onida School received this "Just popping by to say THANK YOU" was given by Sully Unit 79.



Helen Riedlinger and Mary Wranek from Piedmont Unit 311 presenting the Give 10 to Education to the school principal and nurse. The same unit also distributed sweetbreads to the local schools.



December Guide

Plan a Christmas Program for your Unit or Veterans in your community

December 7: Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

December 15: Bill of Rights Day

Guide Correction: The SD STATE Convention is in WATERTOWN



Christmas Parties

Ft. Meade VA – Dec. 8th 1 pm

Hot Springs State Veterans Home - December 5th 1 pm

Hot Springs VA - Dec. 6th 1 pm

Human Services Center – Dec. 9th 5 pm

Sioux Falls VA Dec. 10th 2 pm

American Legion Auxiliary Members,

In times of tears, I'll remember the laughter. In times of sadness, I'll remember the smiles. In times of loneliness, I'll remember all you have shared.

Thank you for all of the comforting words, warm thoughts and love that were sent to me and my family during our time of loss. The pain of grief was eased because you showed how much you cared. We have a great American Legion Family. Thank you,

Lila Speckels, Past Department President 2007-2008

MEMBERSHIP PROMISE for DECEMBER: I promise to honor those who gave their lives to save ours. The Gift of Membership: What better way to get in the holiday spirit than to give the gift of membership to a potential new member? Surprise a loved one for the holidays!

Membership Awards Deadlines - December 31, 2015.

Promise Date: Pearl Harbor Day - Dec. 7, 2015 – 60%.

Need Information?

Department Headquarters, Secretary: Laurel Stringer 129 North Main, Hartford, SD 57033 Phone: 605-461-3389 or email at southdakotaala@gmail.com

Visit the SD ALA Website at www.sdlegionaux.org - for questions or to send information for the website including "Thinking of You" - contact Alice Upshaw by phone at 605-553-4452 or email her at pr.sdala@gmail.com

Office Closed

Dept. Secretary Laurel Stringer announces that the office will be closed December 2 - 4 while she attends the National Conference for Department Secretary.

Thank you!

THE SOUTH DAKOTA
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 American Legion Auxiliary
 Department of South Dakota

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Veterans Day Events across South Dakota



Nancy Jo Spiering from the Elkton Unit submitted pictures of the Veterans Day Wall of Honor that the staff, students, and American Legion Auxiliary members had ready for Veterans Day. There are about 400 puzzle pieces. The gold pieces represent the American Legion members of the Elkton Post and the blue stand for veterans in the family of the staff and students.



Cresbard Unit 213 presented Andrew Edgar with his Good Deed Award at the Veterans Day Banquet. He raised \$700 for the Wounded Warriors.

Veterans are lined up to be thanked by students, staff, and community members at the Ethan School on Veterans Day.



The Spearfish Unit 164 with the Spearfish Senior Center Line Dancers entertained the long term care veterans at the Ft. Meade VA. "Little Al" was determined to have a picture with the line dancers and Unit president Micheline Nelson. After the line dancers performance including patriotic songs, refreshments were served. Dancers and auxiliary members then visited the rooms with cards and gifts made during "Make-a-Difference Day." Veterans enjoyed the "Hugs & Kisses gifts."



Veterans Day Events across South Dakota



Left: Erika Adams, dual member of TAL and ALA Box Elder Post/Unit 315 was the guest speaker for the Piedmont Valley Elementary school Veterans Day Program.

Governor Dennis Daugaard was the guest speaker at the Dell Rapids Veterans Day Supper.

Past Dept. President Sherry Woltjer was the guest speaker at the Webster K-12 School for Veterans Day. Pictured are three WWII Veterans: Russ Shoemaker, John Sinner, Emil Ninke with Charlotte Hoverstadt, Unit 40 President and Past Dept. President Sherry Woltjer.



Right: Diane Watt-Spilde submitted a picture of the Oldham-Ramona School chorus who provided entertainment during their Veterans Day breakfast.

SD Dept. President Jane Benzel read to the 2nd and 3rd graders for Veterans Day at the Hot Spring Elementary school.

Sharon Teunissen from Sioux Falls explained flag etiquette at the local school.



Bobbie, Navy Veteran saluted during a patriotic song from the Spearfish Senior Center Line Dancers program for Veterans Day at the David M. Dorsett Healthcare Center. After the program, Spearfish Unit 164 distributed gifts to 28 residing veterans.



The Veterans' Holiday Relief Drive Kick-off



The Veterans' Holiday Relief Drive kicked off across the state communities and schools on Veterans Day, where Jane Benzel, SD American Legion Auxiliary President presented Autumn Simunek, Miss South Dakota with her first collected "Buddy Basket" for 2015-2016. Jane and Autumn presented the Hot Springs Middle School and High School Student Council with a National American Legion Auxiliary Good Deed Award for their participations as the 2014-2015 Top-Contributing School in the Veterans' Relief Drive service-learning project. Joining the presentation were the representing school's American Legion Auxiliary Unit 71 President, MaryAnn Ackerman and South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary State Education Chairman, Carol Harvey.

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 71 Miss Poppy's Montana Harper and Shiann Moir, and local junior titleholders assist with the Veterans' Holiday Relief Drive kick-off at the Hot Springs School Veterans Day program as Autumn Simunek, Miss South Dakota was the keynote speaker.



South Dakota Department of the American Legion Auxiliary was represented at the 2015 Veterans Stand Down held at the Rapid City Civic Center on November 10, 2015. Autumn Simunek, Miss South Dakota was a guest National Anthem vocalist and distributed Buddy Basket items and meal coupons to Veterans in need, pictured with American Legion Auxiliary family members, Helen Riedlinger and Melanie Martens.

Terry Curry, President of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 22 joined Autumn Simunek, Miss South Dakota for a full day of National American Legion Auxiliary Good Deed presentations and visiting the Rapid City Cornerstone Mission. Miss Simunek also presented the Veterans Relief Drive Service-learning project while Terry presented on the American Flag and poppy to four Rapid City Area schools. Autumn extends her full appreciation to Carol Edwards, Melanie Martens, and Terry Curry for assisting with the Good Deed Awards.



Pictures and narratives submitted by Miss South Dakota, Autumn Simunek.

Our Juniors



Left: 5-year old Mya from Rosholt collected 174 pairs of shoes for her project “Soles for Souls.” Middle: Junior member from the Britton unit Cici Anderson collected travel size soaps for veterans. Right: Each year, the National American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) sponsors an Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3 – 12. **Landon Wallman**, a student from James Valley Christian School, **won first place at the national level** for his essay entitled "What does freedom mean to my family?" Landon received \$50 and an additional \$50 was donated in his name to the American Legion Auxiliary's Children of Warriors National President's Scholarship fund. He was sponsored by the Thompson-Madsen Legion Auxiliary #153 from Carpenter.

Flag Etiquette Programs in our Schools



Above: SD Legion Dept. Membership Chairman Ken Teunissen helps with the Flag Folding Ceremony during the Flag Etiquette program on Veterans Day in one of the Sioux Falls Elementary Schools.

Below: The Piedmont Valley Elementary School had a Flag Etiquette Day in 6th grade. Unit members Helen Riedlinger and Mary Wranek went over the Flag Etiquette and members of the Black Hills Chapter of the American Legion Riders did the Flag Folding Ceremony.

