



THE SOUTH DAKOTA *LEGIONETTE*

Serving Veterans, their Families and their Communities

Honor Our Heroes!

Remember!

I want to wish all of you a Blessed Thanksgiving. Even though this is not a Patriotic Holiday it is a time to be thankful for our Veterans. I find myself being thankful for the right to vote and for all the freedoms we enjoy. We would not have these freedoms without the sacrifice of all our Veterans and their families. Veterans Day was just a week ago. Thank you to Tabor Unit for their Nov. 10th Veteran's dinner and program which was attended by Commander Kevin and Debra Morello, myself and Paul. On Veteran's Day I was able to be at home in Alcester for the afternoon program and to help with our annual Veteran's dinner. The gift shops, West River and the National President (NP), Trish Ward's visit to South Dakota are happening simultaneously. We have had the honor to have NP, Trish help at Ft. Mead's gift shop along with six of our PDP's. Trish enjoyed helping the Veterans at both VA facilities in Hot Springs shop for Christmas gifts for their families. The Spearfish, Custer and Hot Springs units with the help of the Legion Family hosted the evening meals and gatherings for NP Trish Ward. The gift shop at the SF VA will be December 2-3. Susie Learing, Chairman, and the Irene Unit will be shopping for the Veterans in the Human Service Center in Yankton. Some other highlights of her trip to South Dakota was a request of hers to see Mount Rushmore, a small detour to Belle Fourche to see the geological center of the USA, a compass rose which is her symbol, and she saw Crazy Horse. We also stopped at The Black Hill National Cemetery and the Ft. Mead National Cemetery to pay respects. The beginning of December brings the Christmas Parties at all four VA facilities including the Human Services Center in Yankton. Our units in South Dakota have generously supported both the Gift Shops and the Christmas Parties. The Veterans in these five facilities will be REMEMBERED during Christmas. I would also like units to check with nursing homes in your local communities and "Honor Our Heroes" "Remember" them during Christmas and every holiday during the year. Plans are underway for Mid-Winter, February 14-16, 2025, in Oacoma. We will have a Poppy hat/bonnet contest. You will need to incorporate our ALA poppies and my theme "Honor Our Heroes" "Remember" on your hat in some way. We are also anticipating a visit from NW Division National Vice President, Debra Albers from Nebraska. Different breakout sessions to choose from will be available. One breakout that I'm excited about is "Be the One". We have been promoting helping Veterans during hard times, but we have never had an official training. As a Legion Family we are joining together for the "Be the One" trainings. Make plans now to attend Mid-Winter.



National President Trish Ward visits South Dakota

American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward visited South Dakota November 18-20. She was greeted at the airport by members of the Auxiliary and the Legion Riders. President Trish had the opportunity to visit the Fort Meade Gift Shop, Hot Springs State Home Gift and the Hot Springs VA Gift Shop. Spearfish hosted dinner on Nov 18th and our newest unit hosted Dinner at the Crazy Horse Monument and Host Springs hosted the final dinner.



Sereta Douthit, PDP from 1999-2000. Trish Ward NP, Jane Benzel SD Poppy Chairman.

December Calendar

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	December 7th
Us National Guard Birthday	December 13th
Wreaths Across America	December 14th
Space Force Birthday	December 20th



Gift Shops

Sioux Falls VA December 2nd –3rd

Christmas Party

Sioux Falls VA	December 9th
Human Service Cntr	Dec 10th, 5 pm
State Home	December 14th, 1 pm
Hot Springs VA	December 15th, 1 pm
Fort Meade VA:	December 16th



In Loving Memory

6 Gregory; Jean Kayl 10/24; **8 Pierre;** Jacqueline "Jackie" Marso 08/24; **9 Milbank;** Barbara Folk,10/24; **11 Wagner;** Norma Horner 02/24, **25 Madison** ;Adelyne Sterns 09/24; **60 Clark;** Jeanette Bobzien, 10/24; **79 Onida;** Stacie Mosiman,10/24; **80 Britton;** Lorena Johnson 07/24; **92 Redfield;** Anna Mae Clausen, 08/24; **92 Redfield;** Sally Lundstrum 06/24; **109 Gary;** Lylis Nelson 10/24; **128 Hudson;** Luanne Thorpe ,11/24; **130 Kimball;** Betty Marman - 09/24; **131 Valley Springs;** Joanne Swenson 07/24; Verna Bendt 11/22; **140 Salem;** Lavonne Norberg 11/24; **143 Midland;** Rose Nelson 06/24; **143 Midland;** Sophie Foley 12/23; **169 Winner;** Donna Tyburec 10/24; **187 Fairfax;** Linda Remter 10/24; **187 Fairfax;** Marilyn Weidner 01/24; **210 Mount Vernon;** Jolynn Ruden 07/24; **242 Brentford;** Nadine Sievers 10/23; **259 Roscoe;** Berneive Margeson 11/23

December Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the birth of your son on Dec. 25th. and the great miracles He will provide for our servicemen, veterans, their families, and everyone. May God bless and protect all our active servicemen who are fighting for our country's freedom. May He give their families, Peace and contentment while they await their safe return home.

Have a **VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

In Jesus name I pray.



Chancellor American Legion Auxiliary Unit 283

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 283 of Chancellor presented checks in the amount of \$2,500 each to Midwest Honor Flight and to the Sioux Falls Veterans Community Project (Tiny homes for Veterans experiencing homelessness) They were able to do this by selling raffle tickets for a weatherproof bench donated by Compassion in Action of Chancellor. We thank Compassion in Action for doing all the steps to have the bench produced for us. We could not have done these things for our veterans with this gift from them. We also want to thank all the people who bought raffle tickets. The tickets sales made up most of the \$5000.00 raised



L to R Alisha Greve
Dir of Development,
Joann Muller, Vivian
Eitreim, Lynda
DeJong and John
Hatter, Executive
Director



L to R:
Aaron Van Beek,
President & CEO,
Laraine Harms,
Dawn DeNeui and
Wand Wiekier

Hershman-Gordon Unit #59 Wolsey

Unit 59 involved children from their community to lay wreaths on the crosses' as the names of the deceased Veterans were read as part of the Memorial Day program



There is no place like membership

Submitted by Rose Kraft

As you are reading this you have probably just finished celebrating the many blessings you are thankful for. It may be family, good health, a home, financial stability or just making it through one more day. I will tell you I am thankful for all the above but also for the amazing American Legion Family that I am a member of and for each of you for working so hard on membership. As you read this, we have around seven days to the 7th of December when **YOU** want **YOUR** unit to be at 100%. There are **12** units that are thankful for already reaching this goal and each will receive \$25.00 at Midwinter in February, Armour, Colman, Worthing, Nunda, Pollock, Roscoe, Orient, Columbia, Artesian, Wakonda, Hitchcock, and **Murdo with five more than your 100% membership!** You can still make this goal! **OUR DEPARTMENT** is sitting at 62.98% membership, this is 1116 members from 75% for us to receive a financial gift from nationals. This is only like **eight members** from each unit being turned in! Leading the Way in the District Race is District 5 at 66.18% closely followed by District 4 at 66.08%. Which District will reach 75% first? Which District will be first to have all units above 25%? We have 34 units under 25% and 31 of these units have turned in no membership yet this year. **PLEASE DO NOT BE SITTING ON MEMBERSHIPS! TURN THEM IN!** As we talk about gifts, it is that perfect time of year, have you thought about gifting a membership to a person in your community? This could be a renewal, rejoin or a new member all together. Entering memberships has been such a blessing this year as every day I am marking a member who did not join last year and rejoined this year. I have even had a handful who hadn't belonged for years rejoin! **Have you asked?** Has your unit thought about joining ALAMIS? Reminder, there are three levels, read only for \$10.00, write rights for \$15.00 where you can add new members, change names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and more or the \$20.00 where you can do all that is listed and pay for the dues. Those who have gone all in are sharing that it works great! You also should give it a try. I have had some conversations about units closing. Here is a little information. First, they must contact their district president and the department headquarters who may guide them with all the details. The unit stays as a unit in the Department of South Dakota until the next national convention. **MOSTLY**, it is important to transfer all the members to a unit of their choice. This requires some personal conversations. Please, if you are turning in your charter do everything to transfer all the members before June 1. As each of you busily prepare for the holiday season, please take time to remember the men and women who have fought for our rights to celebrate as we wish, remember those who are not home with their families during this time and for those in your community who may quietly have a need. Please share the ALA kindness with the gift of conversation, time, and them knowing you are there to help however they may need. Keep working the mission and watch South Dakota get closer to the Emerald City and 100% Department Membership.



Kennebec-Reliance Celebrates Membership Awards

As part of the Veterans Day Program & Brunch held at the Legion Hall in Reliance on Nov 11th. Kennebec-Reliance Unit #179 presented Continuous Membership awards. Recipients present at the event were: Susan Hamer (45 yrs), Carol Sundall (40 yrs), Karon Bishop (15 yrs), Sue Choal (65 yrs), Martha Coleman (65 yrs)



Sturgis Celebrates 100 Years of serving Veterans



Sturgis Meade Unit 33 was chartered in June 1924; during the Veteran Day celebration at the Sturgis Vets Club the Unit was honored with a cake marking this milestone



ALA Unit #92 Redfield



Pictured are Deborah Burdick, Master Sergeant Rachel Burdick, and Marlene Eimers

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit #92 in Redfield and St. Mary #1423 Catholic Daughters of the Americas, and the Tween Program at the Carnegie Library in Redfield have been making pillowcases that have been sent with deploying troops. Attached to the pillowcases is the Soldiers Prayer for a safe return and inside the cases is a Soldiers Prayer book. Master Sergeant Rachel Burdick is stationed at Osan Air Force Base in South Korea. While Rachel says it is not a deployment it is an assignment, Mrs. Eimers, Rachel's 4th grade teacher, felt it was important that Rachel have the prayer book and pillowcase to know when she is away from the US she is still thought of and prayed for.

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BE IN THE KNOW

Department Secretary SDALA Headquarters

Dept. Headquarters
PO Box 983

Mitchell, SD 57301

email at southdakotaala@gmail.com

Visit the SD ALA Website at
www.sdlegionaux.org

South Dakota Legionette. (Form on the website) Send your news and pictures to the editor at sjlamer@outlook.com or mail them. For reporting an error on names or addresses, change of addresses and deceased members, contact Department Headquarters..

Sioux Falls Unit 15 awards American Legion Auxiliary's Good Deed Certificates



Carole Lee of Sioux Falls Unit 15 had WWII Newsletters from her husband's Army Air Corps 781st Bomb Squadron she wanted preserved. It became a project for 3 young men from the Sioux Falls Schools Community Campus. They scanned and organized pages with Adobe Acrobat for them to be sent to the webmaster of the 465th.org website. After they completed the task, they were awarded the American Legion Auxiliary's Good Deed Certificates.

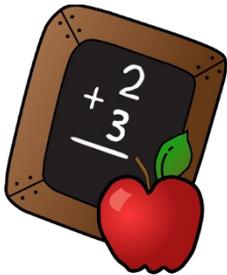
Unit 23 Garretson promotes Education

The Garretson Auxiliary presented 42 Dictionaries to third graders at the Garretson Elementary.



The Irene Legion Family #193

The Irene Legion Family participated in the Homecoming parade



Education Program

Submitted by Jan Seibel, Department Chairman

The SD ALA Education Program will give each auxiliary member the tools to help our youth further their education. Our education program promotes the Auxiliary's role in providing quality education for children and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion and support of education beyond high school, especially for military children. Education is key in keeping America strong and free. Each American Legion Auxiliary member is encouraged to help celebrate American Education Week November 18-22, 2024, Give 10 to Education, Veterans in the Classroom, Purple Up Day April 15, Teacher Appreciation Week May 5-9, 2025 and promote scholarships at unit, department, and national levels. More details: <https://www.sdlegionaux.org> under Education tab. Please share what you do for Education by sending me pictures with information as soon as your event happens. You can also share that in the Legionette, too. If you share with me throughout the year, I can share at our quarterly meetings with the National Education Chair, Tracy Trujillo.

I would like to encourage each unit's education chairman to familiarize yourself with each scholarship requirement so you can share your knowledge with others in the school but more importantly with your own unit's junior members that are senior's in high school or a member that would like to go back to college.

For year 2025, there are four Department and four National Scholarships being awarded. Department scholarships need to be submitted to me by March 1. Three of the four National Scholarships are submitted on-line by March 1 and the other one needs to go to the local unit by March 1 and onto me by March 15. Scholarship forms can be found on our website: <https://www.sdlegionaux.org/scholarships>

At the end of the year, the unit education chair should fill out the Education Questionnaire and Give 10 to Education form, found on the website, and send it to me at seibelj@venturecomm.net or to 42541 102nd St, Britton SD 57430.

Gary Junior Auxiliary were presented an Award for the Most Outstanding Unit Junior Activities Program in the Northwestern Division

On Sunday, October 20th, 2024, in white, South Dakota, the Gary Junior Auxiliary were presented an Award for the Most Outstanding Unit Junior Activities Program in the Northwestern Division which is a National Award. Presenting the award was the South Dakota American Legion Auxiliary Department President AnnaMae Warnier. We had 14 out of 15 Junior Auxiliary members present and they were: Roxanne Raml, Emma Raml, Camdyn Peterreins, Lauryn Peterreins, Bailey Hunt, Sadie Hunt, Leah Hunt, Bethanney Hoffmann, Harper Hoffmann, Aspen Hoffmann, Kenzie Reppe, Rose Swoboda, Lily Swoboda, Violet Swoboda and missing Elise Alva, along with leaders Melinda Jenson and Katie Hunt. Melinda Jenson had to write a summary on what the Juniors do within the year and send it to the National Division, and this includes: Each month of family decorates the General Store Windows, we make cards and decorate tray favors for the Veterans in Sioux Falls and our local Veterans in Gary each month. We are also making the centerpieces for the tables at the 109 Club for each month. We distribute Poppies in May and have a big part of the Memorial Day program in Gary where the girls will read poems, and we sing a couple songs. This year we learned how to do sign language of Pledge Allegiance. At our poultry party we have a game called the Penny Pitch and that is for children to throw pennies on a board and they can get pennies. On July 3rd. Gary has a celebration and before we start the celebration at the park, the junior auxiliary will either sing the Star-Spangled Banner or recite the Pledge Allegiance. This year we also planted flowers down at the Gary Historical Museum for one of our Patch Program activities. At Christmas we usually go caroling to some of the shut-ins or to the veterans or their spouses. We have been working on a National Project where we can earn patches if we do certain activities that are listed in the Junior packets and so far, we have done 150 plus patches.

Now the most exciting news that I am going to share with you all is that four of the Gary Jr. Auxiliary girls will be going out to Denver, Colorado for a national mission training on November 16th. The girls that are going are Roxanne Raml, Rose Swoboda, Lily Swoboda and Violet Swoboda, along with Laura Swoboda and myself (Melinda). I would like to take the time to say THANK YOU to the parents of these awesome Junior Auxiliary Girls and to the Communities that are very supportive in what we all do.



Back row

AnnaMae Warnier, SD American Legion Auxiliary Department President, Bailey Hunt, Emma Raml, Lauryn Peterreins, Camdyn Peterreins

Middle back: Sadie Hunt, Lily Swoboda, Bethanney Hoffmann, Rose Swoboda, Melinda Jenson.

Front Middle: Leah Hunt, Aspen Hoffmann, Harper Hoffmann, Violet Swoboda, Kenzie Reppe.

Front row. Roxanne Raml, Junior Auxiliary President.

Piedmont Unit 311 celebrates 103 Years

Piedmont American Legion Unit 311 celebrated the 103rd Auxiliary birthday November 8 with a cake and ice cream. We love our unit.



Gregory Unit 6 Celebrates 105 Years

Gregory American Legion Auxiliary celebrated their 105th birthday in November.



Happy Birthday

Unit 229 Gertje–Van Luth

Unit 229 members, Vicky Torgerson, Denise Scoblie and Sun Christenson worked at the Big Stone City Community Center on Election Day from 6am-7pm



Youth Hero Awards

The American Legion Auxiliary is a supporter of veterans, military, and their families. Among their various programs is Community Service, Americanism, South Dakota Girl State and Children & Youth Within the Children & Youth Program is the American Legion Auxiliary Youth Hero award which recognizes children demonstrating a physical act of valor. These young people exemplify the motto Service Not Self. They deserve to be recognized for their actions.

The following is a report from the Meade County Sheriff's Office:

Bear Butte Lake can be surprisingly deceiving as many think it's a shallow body of water in reality it is deep enough to get people in trouble. On 07.05.2024, the Meade County Communications Center received a 911 call about a possible drowning at Bear Butte Lake. A young man was reported to be in the water and was struggling to stay afloat. Units from the Meade County Sheriff Office, Sturgis PD, and Sturgis Ambulance and Fire, all responded to the area. A young man who was swimming in the water, with family nearby, became tired and was unable to stay afloat. Luckily, a group of paddle boarders were in the lake, and they observed the young man in distress. As emergency services were arriving, these paddle boarders were able to get to the young man, get him stabilized, and up on a board, saving his life. Without quick action, this incident could have ended in tragedy.

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 33 from Sturgis is proud to show our collective appreciation to Gracey Schave, Kaylee Peterson and Annika Goetz who managed to save the day, and present to them The National American Legion Auxiliary Youth Hero Award, signed by the National President Lisa Williamson.



On November 18, the Spearfish American Legion Auxiliary Unit 164 hosted a dinner in honor of the National President, Trish Ward. During the event, she helped present the National ALA Good Deed Awards. Helping with the presentation was the unit Children & Youth chairman, Connie Wagner.

Created in 2002 by the National Children & Youth Committee, these awards are presented annually throughout the year to recognize the helpfulness of youths under age 18. Five deserving Spearfish Unit Juniors who demonstrated helpfulness; the quality of helping in a particular situation or the quality of showing that you are willing to help somebody received the award.

Isabella Borbely helped decorate the pickup for the Spearfish High School Spartans Homecoming Parade then rode in the back of the pickup to help throw candy to the crowd. She also helped during the Sturgis Rally breakfasts. Hope Herweh loves to volunteer to help serve the meal before the Spearfish American Legion Post 164 meetings with or without the Spearfish Middle School Student Council. She also helped with the distribution of poppies on Memorial Day weekend. Liberty Herweh, 2024 Girls State delegate, also enjoys serving the meal at the Post 164 meeting, she helped on Poppy Day and joined Isabella on the pickup during the high school parade. Kenzie Lawlar helped assemble the diapers bags for the second annual Baby Shower for expecting military families at Ellsworth Air Force Base. She also likes to bake chocolate chip cookies for Veterans. And Aubrey Jo Schuldt enjoyed helping during the Spearfish Festival of Arts in the Park. The American Legion Family has a booth selling breakfast, burgers and brats. Aubrey Jo helped distribute breakfast sandwiches before the vendors opened to the public.

Pictured; Aubrey Jo Schuldt, Connie Wagner, National President Trish Ward, Kenzie Lawlar, Isabella Borbely, Hope Herweh, and Liberty Herweh



Legion Family works together

The Wagner ALA and Wagner Legion teamed up to serve Wagner's monthly Fellowship Feast which is a free meal that is open to the entire community. We did this for our Make A Difference Day activity and are hoping to make it an annual October event in order to better serve our community

Wagner Unit 11



Our unit used the proceeds from our annual raffle to pay a portion of Wagner American Legion member, Dennis Clemens' son Shane's Honor Flight ticket. Dennis and Shane shared the Midwest Honor Flight experience in October.



The Wagner ALA presented the Wagner Cancer Walk and Rummage President Arlis Kafka with an \$800 check which is from the proceeds of the concession stand that the ALA held at the Wagner Cancer Rummage Sale.

Gregory Unit 6

Gregory American Legion and Auxiliary sponsored "Raise The Roof" fundraiser- chili/soup competition and pie auction on November 8th. Seventh grader



Otto Reber was the auctioneer for the pie auction with the top pie going for \$400.00. The proceeds went towards a new roof for the Legion Post Home.



Garretson Dugout and Treats for Halloween!



Unit 41 in the holiday spirit with a Patriotic Tree

Alexandria American Legion Auxiliary Unit #41. Our contribution to Parade of Trees at Hanson County Courthouse.



Spearfish American Legion and Auxiliary supporting Education

On November 20, the Spearfish American Legion and Auxiliary organized and distributed school supplies and clothing to help about 1,650 children in five local schools. Totes were presented to counselors or administrators at Mountain View Elementary, West Elementary, Creekside Elementary, Spearfish Middle School and the Black Hills Christian Academy. This is the third annual school supply drive organized by the Spearfish American Legion family. It starts at the beginning of the school year and donations are accepted for three months. Between the Post and Unit's donations, individual contributions, and Walmart, the donations are estimated at \$1,500. Every year, American Education Week is held a week before Thanksgiving. This year, it started on November 18 and ends on November 22. Have you ever wondered how American education grew to be what it is now? American Education Week was first celebrated on December 4-10, 1921, after the alarming rate of illiteracy was recognized and a meeting was held in 1919 by the American Legion and representatives of the National Education Association (NEA). The aim of this special week was to create awareness about the need for education and garner support to fund schooling systems. In the years that followed, American Education Week gained sponsors that impacted the American education system. American Education Week continues annually in every U.S. community to present the achievements and needs of the local public schools and secure support for meeting these needs.

Pictured are members of the Spearfish American Legion Post 164 and Auxiliary Unit 164.





Christmas at the Capitol

In the Eyes of a Child

On November 23, 2024, the South Dakota American Legion Family gathered to decorate the Christmas Tree at the Capitol. This year, the theme was, "In the Eyes of a Child." The theme was inspiring for the South Dakota American Legion Family. There were ornaments homemade by several American Legion Posts, the American Legion Auxiliary Units, Sons of the American Legion Squadron, and Riders. Others provided lights, ribbons, and accessories. It was a fun afternoon and teamwork



The application process for 2025-2026 national committee appointments is now open!

You need not have served as an officer in your district or department to be eligible for an appointment, and our male spouse ALA members are welcome to apply.

The application window is through Dec. 15. Apply now!

[ALA National Appointment Application \(2025-2026\) - Formstack](#)

Auxiliary members love a challenge, and the national Legislative Committee now challenges departments and divisions to increase participation in corresponding with our legislators through The American Legion's Grassroots Action Alerts. !!The challenge is for each ALA department and division to have the highest percentage of correspondence numbers based on 2025 paid membership each quarter in response to the Legion's Action Alerts. This challenge began Nov. 10, 2024. !! The Legislative Committee will receive a quarterly report from the Legion providing data to determine the numbers required to choose winners for each quarter. The department winner will receive a \$20 donation in their name to the national 2024-2025 focus from the national Legislative chair each quarter, with the division receiving bragging rights. The year-end overall department and division winners will be announced at the Legislative Committee's pre-convention meeting in August 2025, each receiving a \$50 donation to the 2024-2025 national focus. Support of the challenge benefits our mission, the national focus, and bragging rights to all Auxiliary members advocating for the Legion's Legislative Agenda. [Action Center www.voicevoter.net/AmericanLegion/register](http://www.voicevoter.net/AmericanLegion/register)