

POST 15 NEWS



January 2024

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COMMANDER'S CORNER *Dale Hill*

Where has 2023 gone? As we get older, some days seem to drag on, but the years fly by. For those who attended the December Social, I would like your comments on the proposed plans for the Veterans Memorial Park at the State Capitol in Pierre. I will forward comments anonymously to our State Legislators from Post 15.

This month, we have the Post Oratorical Contest and then the District contest in late January. We need candidates and judges. Boys and Girls State applications are coming due, so please let your high school family members know about this unique opportunity to learn how our government works. We will soon start planning for the March Legion Birthday/Recognition dinner, and we need Educator, Law Enforcement, Firefighter, and Eagle Scout of the Year nominations.

2023 membership expired January 1. If you have not renewed, please do so. If you have supplemental insurance through the Legion, it expired at the end of the year if your dues are not current. National Legion dues will be increasing \$5/year for 2025. Post 15 voted to increase dues by \$5 to cover this increase. (See Adjutant column in this newsletter.) The portion the Post gets will support the Post for less than two months, so we continue to look for fundraising opportunities.

The Federal Government has been funding expanded high-speed internet service to rural areas. This has a direct impact on many of our fellow veterans, as rural health care access is increasingly internet-based. Education of our youth and development of economic opportunities in rural areas also depend on continued funding of the Affordable Connectivity Program. Please contact your federal and state elected officials and ask for their continued support of this program.

The South Dakota State Legion Mid-Winter Conference will be in Deadwood on February 16-18. Lets hope the weather cooperates with travel. Hotel reservations are going fast. Contact the Post 15 office if you have questions. Best Wishes for 2024.

1ST VICE COMMANDER

Patrick Branco

Greetings fellow Legionnaires! On Tuesday, December 12, several of us attended the Chamber of Commerce Mixer. We had a great showing of Legionnaires. Typically, Al and I attend these monthly events but this time we had Diane, Cal, Wayne, and even one of our newest members, Jon Theel. We met a lot of business leaders in the community, we sold raffle tickets, signed up Sons of the Legion, Auxiliary members, and even a new Legionnaire. The Mixer was held at the Giving Hope, Inc. Bingo Hall. Giving Hope is a non-profit organization that uses proceeds from its bingo operations to provide charitable gifts to organizations across Sioux Falls serving the needs of children in our community.

On December 13, I attended the Sioux Falls Veteran's Health Administration and Veteran's Benefits Administration monthly stakeholder's meeting. Presentations from representatives of the Community Care department reminded the audience to help educate our veterans on the need to keep the Community Care team informed of any and all appointments that may qualify for community care to make certain the visits are authorized. This will keep veterans from being charged for unauthorized visits to providers. It is best to contact Community Care at 605-333-6800, option 3, to make certain. We also heard from the Spinal Cord Injury team related to access to their specialized care programs. There are currently 76 individuals in the care programs. There was a presentation on services provided for residential care for substance abuse individuals. Care is voluntary and is for a period of 30 days followed by further social and clinical support. The success rate of this rehabilitation program is an extraordinary 42%. Outstanding!

VAVS *Chris Fischer*

Post 15 was invited to attend the annual State Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service [VAVS] Committee meeting via Zoom. Hospital Reps from Hot Springs, Ft. Meade, and Sioux Falls were in attendance. Topics discussed were upcoming holiday parties, needs of each facility, and the 2023 checking account balances. We also reviewed and approved the 2024 financial support for VAVS. The Sioux Falls VA is currently experiencing a demand for winter wear donations. There is full list of everyday needs on the Post 15 website. Enjoy the Holiday Season!

*Uniform caps available in the office
\$65 (hat & pheasant)*

*Wear your cap to membership meetings
and events to let others know of your service and membership.*

SHOOTING SPORTS *Larry Panning*

BB GUN Orientation/Safety Class is January 6 at Humboldt Elementary School, with practice starting January 7 in Hartford. BB gun matches are March 6 at Spink County, March 16 at Pierre, March 23 at Lake County, April 13 at Hartford home range (Humboldt Sharpshooter Match), and the 4H State Tournament is April 26.

SPORTER AIR RIFLE has been practicing since October. Civilian Marksmanship Postal (CMP) #1 is January 15 and CMP #2 is April 11-13, both at Hartford. American Legion Postal is Feb 1.

Annual FUND Raiser (Soup Supper/ Silent Auction) for the Humboldt Sharpshooters in January 27 at St George Parish in Hartford. This is the major fund raiser for the Club and they could really use support from Post 15.

PRECISION AIR RIFLE Six members of this team recently shot in Colorado Springs in the 2024 Olympics Trials. All team members shot their personal best with a couple of shooters scoring 600 (all in the bullseye) or more out of a possible 650 (60 shots at 10 meters, all dead center in the bullseye). A 600 score causes college team coaches to start following shooters closely.

LEGISLATIVE NOTES *Diane Diekman*

Congress passed its \$874.2 billion National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2024 on December 14 and sent it to the White House for President Biden's signature. Congress must still pass full spending bills for FY24 to fund the Defense Department and other agencies. Funding for military construction ends Jan. 19, and funds for the rest of the Defense Department expire Feb. 2. The Defense Department is currently operating under a stopgap funding bill, which means it can't start most new initiatives or move forward with many acquisitions authorized in the NDAA absent a full spending bill.

The American Legion opposes the PLUS (Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans) Act, which would transition the system of securing benefits for disabled veterans to an unregulated profit-driven industry. The PLUS Act would allow automatic accreditation after 90 days regardless of whether VA has completed its verification process. The VA-accreditation program exists to ensure veterans and their family members receive appropriate representation on their VA benefits claims. The American Legion supports the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act, which would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees while assisting veterans with filing a claim for VA disability compensation benefits.

Senate lawmakers confirmed 11 senior military nominees that had been stalled for months, putting an end to the nearly year-long political blockade by Senator Tommy Tuberville. When he lifted his hold on 430-plus nominees whom he had blocked due to his objections over the military abortion access policies, he said he would keep his hold on the 11 four-star nominees in a continuation of that protest, but he relented amid additional pressure from Democratic and Republican leaders. The Senate was scheduled to take its holiday break, but Senator Schumer extended the session by a few days to get the military confirmations cleared. If they had not been approved by the end of the month, the White House would have needed to resubmit their nominations in 2024. — *Military Times*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—JANUARY 2024

- 2 (Tues) Legion Post 15 meeting 7 pm
7 (Sun) Legion Pancake Breakfast & Bake Sale 8:30-noon—Alliance
8 (Mon) Honor Guard breakfast 8 am—Fryn' Pan
9 (Tues) Legion Auxiliary meeting 7 pm
10 (Wed) Legion Riders meeting 7 pm
11 (Thu) Membership Committee meeting 6 pm
11 (Thu) Sons of the Legion meeting 7 pm
16 (Tues) Legion Family Social 5 pm, dinner 6 pm —Alliance—\$10 Meatloaf — **reservations requested by Jan. 12**
21 (Sun) District 7 Oratorical Contest— Humboldt 2 pm
22 (Mon) Martin Luther King Day federal holiday
23 (Tue) Auxiliary Social 5 pm, dinner 6 pm, bingo 7 pm—Alliance Open to the public; **reservations required for dinner**
27 (Sat) Humboldt Sharpshooters fundraiser (Soup Supper/ Silent Auction) St George Parish in Hartford
29 (Mon) Executive Committee meeting 7 pm

Every Monday—Singing Legionnaires practice 7 pm
Every Wednesday—Ladies bridge 12-4 pm
Office is open 11-3 pm M-F.

Save the Date

Feb 4—Four Chaplains 2 pm
Feb 16-18—Mid-winter Conference—Deadwood Lodge



SD15 Honor Guard Rifles (l-r) Bob Workman, Alvin Mescher, Jim Puthoff, Terry Munson, Greg Anderson, Chris Fischer, and Diane Diekman providing three-volley rifle salute for an Army veteran at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery on December 11. Photo by Al Arndt.

POST EVERLASTING

May They Rest in Peace

Rich Lafrentz, 53, Air Force, 11/25/2023;
Jerry Delker, 84, Air Force, 11/21/2023

If you know of a Legion member who has died, call 605-336-3470.



HONOR GUARD COMMANDER

Bill Peters

I hope you had a Merry Christmas. To all who are traveling, safe travels. For some, the holidays are tough and some remain on our "sick list" - keep them in your prayers. If you need something please give me a call. Be proud of the honor guard you are a part of. Your attention to detail when paying respect to our veterans is so appreciated. We are made up of veterans who have a strong conviction to lay our veterans to rest with honors. I am very proud of each of you. I want to pass along from the families and entities I work with to schedule these events, their appreciation also. Short notices have been more frequent and may continue with more family directed burials. You help fill so we have 14 members present! Thank you and Happy New Year.

CHORUS NOTES *Len Neugebauer*

The Singing Legionnaires performed December 3 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Tea, December 4 at Dow Rummel Village, and December 11 at Trail Ridge Senior Living Community. No performances are yet scheduled for this month. The chorus held its annual Christmas party on December 10, at which Robert Johnson was honored as Singing Legionnaire of the Year. The chorus will resume its Avenue of Flags program in May. Contact Todd Schmidt at 605-370-4405 if you know of any Sioux Falls business that would like to participate in this program. Anyone who is interested in singing with our men's chorus or who has any questions regarding chorus activities is encouraged to contact chorus president Bruce Naasz at 605-310-6210 or by email at 66cyclor2019@gmail.com.

ADJUTANT *John Bachmeier*

Notice of vote to raise dues to \$45/year. At the December membership meeting a motion was made, seconded and approved to raise dues to \$45. This requires publication in the newsletter at least 10 days before final vote. Therefore, there will be a final vote on this matter at the February 6 general membership meeting in our meeting room at 1700 W Russell St, Sioux Falls. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. The reason for this increase is National Dues have been raised by \$5 starting July 1 for 2025 membership. There is a new program in place to pay your dues for the next three years at the current rate. If you have not yet renewed your 2024 dues, go online to legion.org and click renew.



Al Arndt, Jon Theel, Patrick Branco, Cal Plenis, and Steve Sikorski at Chamber Mixer, December 12, at Giving Hope, Inc.

LEGION RIDERS

Lamar Nance, Chairman

Our website at <http://siouxfallslegionriders.yolasite.com/> has information regarding membership, some great pictures of past events, and the Legion calendar.

Our meetings are the second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Post home. The January 10 meeting will include installation of 2024 Officers:

Chairman: Lamar Nance

Vice Chairman: Korry Melstad

Secretary: Karen Miller

Treasurer: Jr. Borg

Sgt-at-arms: Nicholas "Grubby" Peddicord

Many thanks to outgoing Secretary Larry Hofhenke for all his hard work and dedication during his tenure.

Anyone who rides a motorcycle and is a member of the Legion, or the Legion Auxiliary, or the Sons of the Legion is invited to be a guest and join.

Quote of the Month: "You know how I always dread the whole year? Well, this time I'm only going to dread one day at a time." — Charlie Brown

New Post 15 Members

We welcome our new members to Post 15 and invite you to attend our membership activities:

Chad Engbrecht, Richard Ronke, and Carl Tolbert

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Alsdpost15 [#SDLegion](https://www.instagram.com/Alsdpost15)



www.siouxfallslegion.org

Post 15 website

www.facebook.com/siouxfallsamericanlegionpost15

[HTTP://WWW.LEGION.ORG/JOIN/PUFL](http://WWW.LEGION.ORG/JOIN/PUFL)

Battleship South Dakota Memorial



Corner of
Kiwanis Ave &
West 12th St

www.facebook.com/bb57memorial
<https://southdakotabattleship.org/>
info@southdakotabattleship.org

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PAID UP FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP—PUFL

AGE	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
	\$1535	\$1399	\$1229	\$1025	\$815	\$599	\$429	\$329

National requests that 2024 MEMBERSHIPS be paid starting in July. National will print and mail a reminder each month until dues are paid. That is a huge expense for National, not your post. We can help eliminate that expense by paying in July. Please consider paying your 2024 dues online, in the office, or by mail, as soon as possible. This year we are seeing more members choosing the Paid Up for Life option. A member can renew online and choose the PUFL option with 12 equal payments or one lump sum. Or you can come into the office to do either of these.

For more information, contact Post 15 at 605-336-3470 or
<https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Membership/Renew#legion-org>.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Paul Fiskum

Hopefully everyone had a good Christmas. With a new year coming, a quick reminder that 2023 memberships ended December 31. We have been working on 100% renewal. Your membership is important to the Legion Family. If you haven't renewed, your options are on line at legion.org or calling 605-336-3470 or coming to the Post 15 office at 1700 W Russell Ave. Suite 510 between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Our monthly meetings are the second Thursday of the month at the Post. We would enjoy seeing you there. Other opportunities for participation are the monthly pancake breakfast on the first Sunday and the Legion family social on the third Tuesday.

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SIOUX FALLS POST 15 AMERICAN LEGION

LEGION OFFICE: 605-336-3470 / 1700 W. Russell St., Suite 510 (north door), Sioux Falls SD 57104

OFFICERS OF SIOUX FALLS POST 15

Commander	Dale Hill
1st Vice Commander	Patrick Branco
2nd Vice Commander	Pete Waldner
Finance Officer	Jim McQuisten
Historian	Sharon Taplett-Lundgren
Sgt-At-Arms	Jim Puthoff
Chaplain	Donna Puthoff
Adjutant	John Bachmeier

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bill Peters—Chair
Joan Ishol, Wayne Sprecher, Mike McGoffin
Steve Reuschhoff, Al Arndt, Dave Row, Randy Miller

COMMITTEES

Chorus: Bruce Naasz
Legion Riders: Lamar Nance
Vets Council: John Bachmeier
Post Everlasting: **vacant**

Americanism: Bruce Swan
Membership: Patrick Branco
SAL: Paul Fiskum
Raffle Sales: **vacant**
Flag Retirement: Dick Moss

OFFICERS OF AUXILIARY Unit 15

President	Kellie Heazlett
1st Vice President	Deb Metzger
2nd Vice President	Kasey Jacobsen
Treasurer	Kathy Dathe
Historian	Judy Hill
Sgt-At-Arms	Barb Hayes
Chaplain	Marva Petit
Secretary	Nancy Andres
Parliamentarian	Ann McGoffin
Past President	Susan Panning
Executive Board	Beth Honerman
Executive Board	Nancy Renner

Office Maintenance : **vacant**
Baseball: Randy Miller
VAVS: Chris Fischer
Memorial Day Flags: Ron Lien
Pancakes: Dale Haas

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