SIOUX FALLS POST 15









July 2025
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COMMANDER'S CORNER

Tatrick Branco

The American Legion of South Dakota held its 2025 convention, both a celebration of achievement and a renewal of its enduring mission, in the welcoming city of Huron from June 20-22. Among the most anticipated moments of the convention was the election of the new Department Commander. Our own Bill Peters mounted a remarkable campaign, winning the admiration and support of members from every corner of the state. The election concluded with the selection of Kevin Hempel, formerly of Post 15, as the 2025-2026 South Dakota Department Commander.

Post 15 was awarded a certificate for meritorious service on behalf of children and youth, with individual commendations presented to Dale Hill and John Bachmeier for their dedicated work. Sharon Tapett-Lundgren's meticulously crafted history submission earned first place honors. Perhaps the crowning honor was the presentation of the Americanism Excellence Award, complete with a striking eagle's head sculpture. Post 15 will hold this award for the coming year as a symbol of devotion to the ideals of citizenship, patriotism, and service above self.

Governor Rhodes and Senator Thune both delivered powerful speeches that emphasized the value, legacy, and ongoing relevance of the American Legion. Their words reminded all in attendance of the vital role veterans play in shaping and safeguarding our society. Adding national gravitas, James A. LaCoursiere Jr., the National Commander of the American Legion, was present throughout the conference. His leadership and vision provided inspiration and reinforced the unity and purpose shared by Legionnaires across the country.

As the conference drew to a close, there was a palpable sense of anticipation for the year ahead. While the results of the commander election brought both disappointment and hope, the achievements of Post 15 and the rousing addresses from distinguished guests left everyone invigorated. The American Legion of South Dakota stands ready to meet the challenges and possibilities of the coming year.

UNIT 15 AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Deb Metzger

As you read this newsletter, we are just getting back from Department Convention in Huron. It's always good to see everyone from around the state and meet new people who are working for a common cause. We had a good representation from Unit 15. Thanks to everyone who attended. Poppy Days was a huge success this year with our Unit earning around \$3,200. Unit 15 voted to donate \$2,000 to Honor Flight for veterans' airline tickets from the Poppy Fund. It's always a pleasure to help our veterans go on this type of journey - I know everyone who goes on their mission really enjoys this experience. We have a lot of things coming up this summer. The Sioux Empire Fair is August 1-9. The Legion and Auxiliary will have a booth at the fair and we can always use more help to "man" this booth. August 4 is the Navy Week dinner with Rear Admiral Michael Wosje at the Alliance. Social from 5-6 pm with dinner to follow - please contact Post 15 for reservations. We want to show the Rear Admiral and his family we care. August 19 is the 4th Annual "Chip in for Vets" Golf Tournament at Elmwood. We only have room for 36 teams of four and spots are filling up. Please contact me at 605-366-7379, Kasey Jacobson at 605-270-0289, or Karen Dunham at 605-366-3291 if you want to register for this golf tournament. All funds go directly to the Veterans Community Project. We can always use more sponsors or door prizes for this event. Let us know if you can help us out. We have different levels of sponsorship. The Stand Down is scheduled for September 19 at the Alliance. We need help setting up and serving our veterans - please give me a call if you can help. We currently have 236 members of Unit 15 but we can certainly use more members. Current members, reach out to your friends and family to see if they want to join; reach out and volunteer for one of many committees we have; attend a meeting.

1ST VICE COMMANDER

Dick Moss

Flag Day provided the opportunity to identify several areas that need improvement. On Monday, June 16 the Officers had an informative meeting to begin corrective action of these issues. In the future the script for the ceremony will have highlighting of segments of the ceremony that each participant can identify. The individual positions for the ceremony will be assigned prior to the events. Practice will be held before the actual ceremony. The promotion of the Flag Day Retirement Ceremony was also addressed and will be revised and started much earlier than in the past. Invitation to outside participants (Scouts) will be completed much earlier to confirm participation. Having areas that need attention provides the opportunity for correction and modification. Thanks to all who were involved.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Kelly Gillespie, Detachment Commander

Well summer is upon us, and the Fourth of July is right around the corner. I hope you all take some time to spend with family and friends on our nation's birthday, and I would also like you to take time to reflect on what it means to be an American and what our Veterans have sacrificed for us to enjoy the freedom we have today. I would also like to have you ask yourself, "What can I do to help out the Legion and support the work they do for our veterans?"

So, what are the Sons doing in the next month? Well to start with we will be running a raffle to raise funds for various Legion Programs such as Boys State and the Veterans and Child Welfare fund later this summer and early fall. We also will be raising and lowering the flag at the Sioux Empire Fair in August. We will need many members to help sell raffle tickets and help at the fair. Please consider helping with these events.

Finally, July 1 is the start of the 2026 membership year. I encourage all members to renew their membership early and continue honoring the veteran that made your membership possible. As a reminder, dues have increased to \$27 starting July 1. You can renew online at mylegion.org, call the Legion office, or stop in to renew. At our July meeting we will be discussing an incentive program for members who renew early. More details will follow in the August newsletter. As always you are more than welcome to email me at sdsq15sal@gmail.com or call/text 507-227-4539 if you have any questions. Hope to see you all at various events and our monthly meetings.

LEGION RIDERS

Lamar Nance, Chairman

The Legion Riders welcome new member Dean Van Dyke. Upcoming rides:

July 12 - Poker Run Fundraiser for Fitzmaurice statue; July 19 - Marion Post 235 7th Annual 2nd Amendment Poker Run; July 26 - Militiamen VMC Poker Run.

Anyone who rides a motorcycle and is a member of the Legion, Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of the Legion is invited to be a guest and join. Our website at http://

<u>siouxfallslegionriders.yolasite.com/</u> has information regarding membership, some great pictures of past events, and the Legion calendar.

Quote of the Month: "True patriotism hates injustice in its own land more than anywhere else." – Clarence Darrow



Buffalo Days Parade in Luverne

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—JULY 2025

- 1 (Tue) Legion Post 15 meeting 7 pm—\$975 drawing
- 4 (Fri) Independence Day—Flag retirement—Sioux Falls Fireworks
- 6 (Sun) Legion pancake breakfast & bake sale 8:30-noon—
 Alliance
- 7 (Mon) Military Appreciation Night 6:30 pm Harmodon Park
- 8 (Tue) Legion Auxiliary meeting 7 pm
- 9 (Wed) Legion Riders meeting 7 pm
- 10 (Thur) Twins baseball game bus trip 5:30 am
- 10 (Thur) Membership Committee meeting 6 pm
- 10 (Thur) Sons of the Legion meeting 7 pm
- 14 (Mon) Honor Guard breakfast 7:30 am—Fryn' Pan
- 15 (Tue) Legion Family Social 5 pm, dinner 6 pm —Alliance—\$10 Broasted chicken reservations by July 10
- 22 (Tue) Auxiliary Social 5 pm, dinner 6 pm, bingo 6:30—Alliance Open to the public; reservations required for dinner
- 28 (Mon) Executive Board meeting 7 pm

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

Save the Date

Aug 4— Dinner with Rear Admiral Michael Wosje

Aug 19—Auxiliary Unit 15 Golf Tournament

Sept 19—POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony

Oct 18—Navy Ball

Veterans Visits

Veterans and spouses, we need you to exchange your military stories with those in retirement homes and hospice care. The visits last an hour or two. Call the Post 15 office at 605-336-3470 for more information. All are invited to come and join the conversations. Current visits scheduled:

June 25 - Good Samaritan Sioux Falls Center 401 West 2nd Street @ 2:30 p.m.

July 24 - Touchmark at All Saints 111 West 17th @ 1 p.m.

July 23—Good Sam Prairie Creek @ 2 p.m.



JULY 4, 2026 – HAPPY BIRTHDAY USA

We celebrate our nation's 250th birthday.

FOLLOW US on Instagram!

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www.siouxfallslegion.org

Post 15 website

www.facebook.com/siouxfallsamericanlegionpost15
HTTP://WWW.LEGION.ORG/JOIN/PUFL

Uniform caps available in the office \$70 (hat & pheasant)

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

New Post 15 Members

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

John Kyriazis, Richard Stinger, Dale Nustad, Jack Long, Richard Sprenger, Michael Schad, Timothy Royse, James Pieschke, Clayton Olson, Thomas Hegdahl, Nathaniel Tunink, Michael Kingsley, Terrance Mikkelson, Toney Jackson, Jim Le Duc, David Walker, Eugene Erickson, Jorge Johnson, Monica Strasser, Robert Rabine, Robert Westcott, Ivar Kaardal

HONOR GUARD COMMANDER

Bill Teters

Recognizing Barry Andres's Dedication & Al Arndt's Commitment to Honor Guard Memories

As an Honor Guard, we dedicate ourselves to honoring those who have served, ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten. The adjoining list, thoughtfully compiled by Barry Andres, represents the many locations where we have paid tribute over the years. His meticulous recordkeeping has helped us reflect on the depth and importance of our mission and, for that, we extend our sincere gratitude.

We also want to recognize Al Arndt for the invaluable work he has done in capturing these solemn moments through photography. Al has spent years documenting funerals, preserving the legacy of service and sacrifice. His dedication has helped bring attention to our mission, ensuring that the Honor Guard's efforts are visible and appreciated. While there are far too many images to publish them all, you can see his remarkable work by checking our Facebook page regularly.

We thank both Barry and Al for their commitment and contributions. Their efforts make a difference in honoring veterans and keeping the spirit of service alive.

To our members and those considering joining—this is the work we do every day. If you've ever thought about being part of the Honor Guard, now is the time. Together, we continue to stand in respect and remembrance.

Let us continue our mission with the same dedication and honor that Barry has shown in compiling this list.

If you've ever thought about joining the Honor Guard, now is the time—because every name, every site, and every tribute matters.

Here is Barry's list of cemeteries and locations where our Honor Guard has paid tribute in recent years:

Asbury United Methodist Church

Augustana Lutheran Church

Barnett Lewis Funeral Home

Beaver Valley Lutheran Church Cemetery

Benton Lutheran Cemetery, Crooks

Brandon Lutheran Cemetery

Canistota Cemetery

Celebration United Methodist, Brandon

Church of the Good Shepherd

East Nidaros Cemetery, Baltic

Eastside Lutheran Church

Emery Community Cemetery, Emery

Faith Baptist Church

Forest Hill Cemetery, Canton

George Boom Funeral Home

Germantown Presbyterian Cemetery, Chancellor

Grandview Covenant Cemetery, by Alvin Lake

Green Hill Cemetery, Alexandria

Hartford Community Cemetery

Heartland Funeral Home, Brandon

Heritage Funeral Home

Heritage Lutheran Church, Brandon

Hills of Rest Cemetery

Hills of Rest Mausoleum

Larchwood City Cemetery

Legion Hall, Renner

Lennox City Cemetery

Miller Downtown

Miller Funeral Home West

Miller Southside Funeral Home

Mount Pleasant Cemetery

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Pleasant View Cemetery, Harrisburg

Pleasant View Cemetery, Valley Springs

Risen Savior Catholic Church, Brandon

Rustic Hills Community Church

South Dakota Military Alliance

South Dakota Veterans Cemetery

Spirit of Truth Lutheran Church, Brandon

St. Joseph the Workman, Colton

St. Rose Cemetery, Garretson

St. Stephens Catholic Cemetery, Bridgewater

St. Ann's Catholic Cemetery, Humboldt

St. Lambert Catholic Church

St. Michael Cemetery

Swedona Covenant Church Cemetery

Touchmark at All Saints

West Nidaros Cemetery

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Woodlawn Cemetery

Worthing Cemetery, Worthing

Zion Lutheran Cemetery, Garretson

CHORUS NOTES Len Neugebauer

The Singing Legionnaires performed June 8 at Grace Lutheran Church. The chorus is scheduled to perform June 29 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, July 7 to sing the national anthem for Legion Baseball at Harmodon Park, and July 20 at Peace Lutheran Church. The chorus continues to rehearse at Post 15 on Monday nights at 7 p.m. Anyone who may be interested in singing with our men's chorus or who has questions regarding chorus activities is encouraged to contact chorus president Bruce Naasz at 605-310-6210 or by email at 66cycler2019@gmail.com. The chorus posted American flags on June 14 Flag Day and is scheduled to post flags on July 4 Independence Day. The chorus is still offering individual sponsorships for posting flags along downtown Phillips Avenue. If you or someone you know would like to sponsor a flag, perhaps in honor of a loved one, please contact Todd Schmidt or Bruce Naasz. Also, contact Todd Schmidt at 605-370-4405 if you know of any Sioux Falls business that would like to participate in this flag program.

WELCOME REAR ADMIRAL MICHAEL WOSJE

Monday August 4, 2025 1600 West Russell Street, Sioux Falls

Hosted by



Sioux Falls, SD Post 15

The public is invited to a reception and dinner honoring Rear Admiral Michael Wosje. Admiral Wosje is a Sioux Falls native who graduated from O'Gorman High School with the class of 1989.

Monday August 4, 2025 1700 hours / 5pm Social 1800 hours / 6pm Dinner Program to follow Dinner \$15 / Beef Tips Reservations before July 29, 2025 – Call 605.336.3470

The U.S. Navy proudly announces Navy Week's return to Sioux Falls, August 4-10. As part of a nationwide outreach effort, Sioux Falls Navy Week will bring 50-75 Sailors to engage directly with the community through a weeklong series of performances, educational events and service projects. Help us kick off the week on August 4 by making your reservation today.

SHOOTING SPORTS

Larry Fanning

BB Gun Team continues to practice for Daisy National Tournament at the end of the month. As defending National Champion, they need to shoot their best. Best of Luck Team!! Sportier Air **Rifle** is practicing for a match also at Rogers, Arkansas, at the same time. Precision Air Rifle has been very busy. They attended a national match run by National Governing body for US Olympic Shooting where USA open, Olympic shooters and Juniors all compete against each other. It is the toughest match our kids will ever compete in. This was a six-day tournament. Small Bore (.22) prone, men and women, 50 meters for two days. Then two more days (.22) with 20 shots kneeling, twenty shots prone and twenty shots standing over another two days and lastly, Air Rifle all standing, 10 meters, men and women, two matches over another two days. **Notable Results:** Mausten Stelter (m) got **third** place in juniors for prone, Adalynn Roark (w) got first place in junior prone and Carly Weeman (w) got third place for junior prone. Baylee Bender also attended the match. It was held at Talladega and Anniston, Alabama, during some very hot days. Team members all shot their personal best in some events. Tough competition and outstanding scores.

CONGRATULATIONS ALL!

VAVS Chris Fischer

Seven members from Post 15 attended the "Picnic with the Vets" at the VA Hospital on June 18. Due to the weather, it was moved inside. We joined the vets in fellowship, and the hospital staff provided lunch. It was a great time and rewarding for all in attendance. If you wish to join us for the July 16 picnic, mark your calendar and contact Sue at the Legion office. We need to provide an accurate head count for the meal. More VA info will be coming your way after next month's quarterly meeting.

POST EVERLASTING

May They Rest in Peace

Ruben Hofer, 95, Army, 12/27/2024; Verlyn "Gerry" Giddings, 84, Army, 2/9/2025; Leverne Eckman, 93, Air Force, 3/27/2025; Jamie Rodriguez, 54, Navy, 6/6/2025

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



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

Starting in July, National prints and mails a reminder each month until the year's MEMBERSHIP dues are paid. That is a huge expense for National, not your post. We can help eliminate that expense by paying early. Please consider paying your 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.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

Randy Miller, Post 15 Athletic Officer

The Sioux Empire Baseball Association (SEBA) and Post 15 baseball teams will host Military Appreciation Night at Harmodon Park on July 7. The East will host the West, with Jr Legion game at 3:30 and Sr. Legion game at 7:00. Announcements and recognition at approximately 6:30 will include Post 15 Color Guard and Chorus, recognition of Veterans and Post 15 baseball teams, and 100 Year Commemoration of American Legion Baseball.

June 13-16, Post 15 East Sr. and West Sr. teams played in the Dakota Classic Tournament against some of the Region's best teams. This was a great showcase of American Legion Baseball with 36 Sr. teams from ND, MN, SD, NE, MO, & Canada). Cohosted with Post 307 (Renner) and Post 131 (Brandon Valley). Both Post 15 teams represented themselves well with SF West record as 2-2 in Pool Play. SF East record was 3-1 in Pool Play, qualifying for the Championship Bracket and losing 4-1 in the Quarterfinal Game to the eventual Tournament Champion.

The South Dakota High School Activities Association voted to not add high school baseball as a state-sanctioned sport but to consider the potential in the future.

Photo (right): Sioux Falls Post 15 presents 2025 American Legion Baseball Support Check on June 19. L-R: Jeff Campbell, SEBA Director of Baseball Operations; Randy Miller, Post 15 Baseball Liaison; Chad Barman, SEBA Executive Administrator.



Americanism Golden Eagle Award presented to Post 15 at the Department Convention for its involvement in Scouting. June 22, 2025. Photo by Al Arndt. L-R: Americanism Commission Chair Dave Booze, Post 15 Past Commander Dale Hill, Department Commander Kevin Morello.



Battleship South Dakota Memorial



USS South Dakota Day of Honor August 9, 2025

May 1—September 30 Free admission—open 9:30-5:30 daily www.facebook.com/bb57memorial



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Fly A Flag In Honor Of Loved Ones—The Post 15 Chorus is offering to fly your flag along Phillips Ave during 8 holidays for a \$44 donation. Call the Legion office for details.



Residential Real Estate Karen Dunham 605-366-3291 Deb Metzger 605-366-7379

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4th Annual American Legion Auxiliary Unit 15 - Golf Tournament August 19, 2025 Elmwood Golf Course

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(Coffee & Rolls) Shotgun Start: 9 a.m. FORMAT:

"Chip in for Vets!"

PIN PRIZES: Front and Back Nine

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VETERANSI

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The American Legion Auxiliary - Unit 15 -Invites you to participate at these sponsorship levels!

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The ALA is a 501c19 Non Profit Organization

For more info contact: Golf Committee

Kasey Jacobson - 605-270-9289

email: jacobson1122@gmail.com Karen Dunham - 605-366-3291 email: karendunham@dunhamresidential.com Deb Metzger - 605-366-7379 email: debmetzger@dunhamresidential.com



MUST PRE-PAY TO SECURE A SPOT FOR YOUR TEAM!

Tournament Limited to 144 Players!



Certificate of Meritorious Service to the Children and Youth Program was presented to Posts 49 and 15 at the annual convention in Huron on June 22, 2025. Photo by Courtney Steffen.

L-R: Children and Youth Chair Harry Boner, Lorraine Paver, Post 49, John Bachmeier and Dale Hill, Post 15, Department Commander Kevin Morello.

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SIOUX FALLS POST 15 AMERICAN LEGION

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COMMITTEESAmericanism: Martina GoergenYouth Trooper: Dave RoweMembership: Patrick BrancoBaseball: Randy MillerOffice Maintenance: vacant

Rummage Sale: vacant Dance: Patrick Branco VAVS: Chris Fischer Vets Council: Jonathan Theel Memorial Day Flags: Ron Lien Pancakes: Dale Haas

