

VFW POST #17

AMERICAN LEGION POST #24

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS POST #13

NEWSLETTER

Jan-Feb 2008

Editor: TBA

VFW Commander

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Holiday Season. With the New Year you will find some changes at the VFW Clubroom. There will be some price changes with the food portion. The prices for catering will see some increases, this will help keep pace with the cost of the food. Also the cost of Friday Nite Dinners will increase, again to help cover the increase in the cost of the food. Both of these were reviewed and approved at the October House and Regular Meetings.

The other big change is the Ballroom will become NO SMOKING effective January 2, 2008. Smoking will still be permitted in the Bar area. This was discussed and approved at the December House and Regular meetings. A lot of the events in the Ballroom are non-smoking at the present.

We still need more members, we are currently at 485 and our goal is 563. We need you to ask your friends, relatives, neighbors that are eligible to join and help all Veterans keep their benefits. Congress looks at the number of members in all the Veterans organizations when approving legislation. The big ones are the VFW, American Legion and DAV, that's why it helps to belong to all the ones you are eligible for. They say that there is strength in numbers and in this case it is very true.

Coming up in the next issue we will be talking about election of officers for 2008-2009. We would like you to become active in the organization and help us in the decisions we make about our facility.

Rich Kezar, Commander
VFW

QUARTERMASTER QUIPS

The by-laws of our Post/Corporation were last adopted in 1990. Needless to say, there have been many changes in our membership, attendance at meetings and various other things since that time. We have been working on updates for about a month and at the December meeting the changes were read to the members attending. The changes will be voted on at our January meeting. The amendments together with the amended version and the old by-laws are available for member inspection during regular office hours or by appointment at times other than when I am in the office.

The last couple months have been very busy for our active members, with such things as membership work, Veterans Day, Poppy Day, Voice of Democracy and Patriotic Pen, Klondike, Pancake Breakfasts, Christmas Party, and Delivery of presents to shut-in Veterans. (Many members have stepped up to the plate in these and other projects, and my Thanks go out to each and every one) The Canteen has also been busy with Christmas Parties, Weddings, family get-togethers, etc., therefore our regular Friday Evening meals have taken a back seat. We intend to get back on schedule again with the start of the New Year. Remember to get your reservations in so we can properly serve you at the time you desire and with the food of your choice. A little profit during these winter months will surely help with the heating bills as well as keeping our lots free of snow. Our Carpet Fund has continued to grow as a result of Pancake Breakfasts, Sale of Vietnam Books as well as donations. We are adding a new item in that we will be selling Barbecue Sauce which is being donated to us by Jerry Mardian. There are 3 flavors, and we hope you will find some extra dollars to enjoy the flavors and to help our Carpet Replacement Fund.

We have heard comments from many people about how they have a hard time coming to the VFW because of the cigarette SMOKE. The House Committee has heard these comments and effective after Jan 1st, instituted a NO SMOKING ban for the ballroom area. This will be inconvenience for smokers who can go to the bar area, but we also hope this will allow non-smokers to use our facility.

Al Sebert, Quartermaster, 2291432
VFW Post 17

American Legion Commander Briefs

Let me begin this month with a reminder for any member that has not yet paid their dues for 2008, to get them paid. If your dues are not received in time, you could be dropped from the roster, which could cause you to lose any benefits that may come with years of continuous membership. I extend my thanks to the GO Getters who have worked the phones and run up miles to try to get everyone signed up for 2008. They did a good job ahead of the Early Bird Feed and have continued to work on getting those last few that we know are out there. The number of hours they put in to get the dues from those last few members seems to be way out of line. I have been asking for commitment of time to the Post, these members are out in front and getting it done! THANKS!!

We have a target of 825 members for the coming year, and as of Dec. 7 the Department reports our membership as 685, a difference of 140. In the past year we lost about 40 members, so if we didn't sign up a single new member we are still down by 100 members. These stragglers cause most of the work for the membership team. And yet we try to track down every one as best as we are able. The effort is a drain on the resources of the Post, since for these last few the cost of getting them signed up again is probably more than the Post will keep from dues.

The reason for going through all the work is simple, without the numbers, politicians do not listen. This is most important at the National level, but applies to every level of government, all the way down to four fair city. If we cannot get the attention of our elected officials, then those programs that we have fought for in the past will gradually will be taken away. Those promises made to all of our service men and women will not need to be kept. The Veterans who are returning and in need of an advocate will not have one.

While we need new members all the time, we also need the current members. Every member counts, missing the date for the 2008 year takes a little wind out of all of our sails. Consider being a PUFL, while it may be a lot of money up front, all it takes is one increase in the dues to make this cost effective. Our post has many PUFLs, including me.

For those who want to know "What's in it for me?" I suggest you look to the various discounts and benefits available to members. Check our web site at www.aberdeenlegion.org/, look for the link to membership benefits. You may have to dig a bit, but the odds are pretty good you can come out ahead.

Check our membership drive progress at the Dept web site, www.sdlegion.org, and look for the Membership stats link.

Happy New Year!

Steven Nemmers

Commander American Legion

Carpet fund/Vietnam Book/ Barbeque Sauce

Through the generosity of Quality Quick Print we have been given copies of the 300+ page book printed for the dedication of the South Dakota Vietnam Veterans Memorial. There are some left but we have seen a good response to the book for only \$15.00.

In addition Jerry Mardian has donated bottles of Barbeque sauce to the Post as a fund raiser for our carpet fund. There are three flavors, Original, Spicy, and Smoked. They sell for \$2.50 per bottle, or 3 for \$5.00. They are good quality sauce bottled as Grill'n Time.

We'd like to Thank both of these businesses for their generosity in helping the Post and its efforts to replace carpeting, Quality Quick Print and Jerry Mardian of Jerry Mardian Sales we do appreciate your generosity.

DAV

We would like to Thank all of our members who sold tickets to raffle the 4 wheeler. We also would especially Thank those who purchased the tickets, and made the raffle a success. The winner of the ATV was Sharon Gould from Aberdeen.

The proceeds from the raffle are set aside to, at some point, replace our DAV van which transports Veterans to the VA in Sioux Falls. At present our funds are healthy but actual replacement costs are yet to be determined. Our current van is doing an outstanding job, and we hope that it will still be with us for another 50K miles or so. Drivers are always needed. Some

drivers drive specific days, while others are there to fill in as subs. All are appreciated; please consider volunteering for this service to our VETS!!!

Planning is going on for the DAV State Convention which will be here in Aberdeen on May 1, 2&3. The convention will be held at the Ramkota Inn. More on this next newsletter. Now is the time to volunteer and help welcome to our city members of the Disabled American Veterans from across the state.

To All Veterans:

All local Veterans organizations are run by nearly 100% volunteers. The leaders are busy as we all are and yet need input to improve situations. They need input as to what is good as well. Each organization needs to hear from its members. As a means of remaining anonymous (if desired) members can write their feelings, concerns, comments and send them to:

NEWSLETTER VFW, AM LEGION, DAV
P.O.Box 334
Aberdeen, SD 57402-0334

If you would like something published you can **also use this means and your letter may be published.** Specific issues for an organization will be turned over to the respective Commander, and he/she will respond accordingly. General questions will be answered directly or in the newsletter.

At times, there are rumors of some members transferring memberships to out of area organizations. Those individuals then usually become inactive and a number. We would therefore encourage input prior to transferring and try to make changes and amends to keep our local Veterans organizations viable in our community.

If you become aware that you may not have received a newsletter, please contact Al Sebert. He keeps the master list of members who receive this newsletter. It rarely happens but has happened due to our error and sometimes due to publisher error.

Our memberships reflect a broad spectrum of military backgrounds. It also reflects rank of leadership at various levels. What it does not show is the POTENTIAL that the organizations have in its memberships. An example is an Iraqi

Freedom Veteran who is in his/her early 30s and is Senior Vice Commander in a Veterans organization out of state. SALUTE

The South Dakota American Legion is sponsoring Veterans Benefits Forums across SD. The presentations consist of information packed briefings of VA benefits. The forums usually last for about 2 ½ hrs. The briefings are all based around a computer Power Point slide presentation that consists of 140 slides that cover 25 VA benefit topics.

The briefings are conducted by the Legion Department Service Officer, Warren Aas of Watertown and several guest speakers Tribal and County CVSO (county veteran's service officers) and representatives from the VA in Sioux Falls Medical Center.

Each speaker will brief on VA Benefit topics that includes Disability Compensation and Pension (C&P), Co-payments, VA Healthcare Enrollment, Burial Benefits, Beneficiary Travel Pay, Service Connection, Black Hills Cemetery, to mention a few. The forums start at 7PM and finish around 9:30PM. There is no charge to attend and refreshments will be served during and immediately after each Veterans forum. **You do not need to be a Veteran to attend.** Family, friends and the general public are invited. Several forums have already been held, but yet remaining is the one in Britton on Feb 4, 2008 in the Community Center at 7PM.

When we say that "We Support our Troops" do we need to step up to the plate and do as we say? Many of us have spent the holidays thousands of miles from our loved ones. We know it is not fun, and in fact many volunteer for extra duty during such times to keep busy and forget about what they are missing at home. If you would like to consider doing something for someone stationed overseas, contact one of our Commanders. They will probably have some ideas of some things to do.

The saying should also be for those who have served and are alone or medically involved. We must not forget them, but support them as the VFW has done by sending baskets of items to those in nursing homes, and home bound during this past month. Perhaps our future slogan should be "We support our Troops, both current and past"

CALENDAR OF POST HOME EVENTS

Jan-11 Friday Dinners 5:00-8:00PM

Jan-13 Sunday Aman Family 1:00-5:00PM

Jan-25-26 Hub City Dart Tournament

Friday-6:00PM

Sat-9:00AM

Feb-3 3M Bingo Party

Feb-8 Friday Dinner 5-8PM

Feb-9 Federal Credit Union Annual Mtg.

Feb-17 Dakota Rangers 1-5PM

Feb-22 Friday Dinner 5-8PM

We have received many memorials remembering a Veteran who has passed on. Several have gone to the Carpet fund, and will be recognized when the carpet replacement is complete. Thanks to all who remember us on the passing of one of our own.

If you are planning a birthday, anniversary, wedding or party please contact John "Pickle" Meier at 229-4336 or 225-9975 or 380-2002 for bookings

Remember Carpet Fund donations!!

Friday nite Dinners!!!!

Planning a Barbeque, need some sauce?

Need a Vietnam Memorial Book?