

# VFW POST #17 AMERICAN LEGION POST #24 DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS POST #13 NEWSLETTER

May-June 2008

Editor: TBA

## **VA Director in Question**

(Credit to KSFY and Argus Leader)

When past Director Dennis Foell was asked to resign in 2007, the Secretary of Military and Veteran's Affairs, Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, named an interim director to replace him temporarily. General Gorman stated at the time that he would be retiring himself soon, and he wanted the new Secretary to be involved in the appointment of the next Director. The situation was less than ideal, but was accepted on that basis; that the new Secretary should not be saddled with a director that he had not appointed. After General Gorman's retirement, the new Secretary of Military and Veteran's Affairs, Maj Gen Steven Doohen, replaced him and set about appointing a Director of the division, which is where the real problems started. Gen Doohen wanted to appoint the interim director to the position without due process, but was informed that SD Law requires the Veterans Commission, a committee of six veterans appointed by the Governor to fill an advisory roll to the Division of Military and Veterans Affairs, to nominate the candidate.

In late April, a coalition of veterans groups called on Gov. Mike Rounds' administration to immediately remove the state's acting VA Director George Summerside. The SDVA Council has questioned Summerside's military service record and whether he is the best person for the job. They also contend that Round's administration has run roughshod over the state veterans commission, which is authorized by SD law to "nominate the director."

Maj Gen Steven Doohen, adjutant general and secretary of the SD Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs, appointed Summerside in December as permanent director. But after protests from Veterans groups, at Round's urging, reduced Summerside's appointment to

acting director pending resolution of the next Legislature who will clarify who has authority to appoint the director. Rounds said that the position will remain unfilled until a compromise can be worked out. He also asked Doohen to schedule a meeting with the commission, which won't occur until June due to scheduling conflicts.

At question then is the Division will have been without a permanent Director for over 2 years by that June meeting. Also the Veterans groups question a second period of military service by Summerside that is in question as to it being possibly less than an honorable discharge.

Rounds insisted Summerside is doing a good job and had an honorable discharge from the US Navy after serving from 1972 to 1976. SD attorney general Larry Long has contended that no subsequent military service and discharge by Summerside beyond the Vietnam War is relevant.

Andy Gerlach, deputy secretary of the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, said he respects the opinions of the veteran's service groups. But Gerlach added that Doohen hired Summerside and "I don't think Maj Gen Doohen has any plans to make any personnel changes in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs."

For anyone wanting to contact the Governor, Office of Governor-500 E. Capitol Ave. Pierre, SD 57501 773-3212 or the Division of Military and Veterans Affairs 425 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501-5070. 773-3269 or Toll free 1-877-579-0015.

This issue is one which may affect our states Veterans and the Military in South Dakota. Have an opinion and want to voice it in this newsletter? Send it to PO Box 334, Aberdeen, and we may see it in the next newsletter.

(Thanks also to the Aberdeen Legion Web site for carrying the above information)

## QUARTERMASTER QUIPS

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the amendments to the by-laws of our Post/Corporation, which were last adopted in 1990, have taken another step forward. They were adopted at our January Post meeting and since that time have been forwarded to our State VFW for review. I approved at that point, they are forwarded to the National VFW. If approved there, we are home free with new by-laws. We still have not received a yes/no or go to he \_\_\_. I'm not sweating it but will have a sigh of relief anyway.

The Canteen has gotten back on track with the usual Friday evening meals, pot luck Fridays, etc. Remember to get in your reservations so we can properly serve you at the time you desire and with your choice of food. January thru April has been a long siege with limited outside activities scheduled at our Post Home. So I hope you will take advantage of the things to offer.

Our carpet fund has continued to grow as a result of Pancake Breakfasts, sale of Vietnam Books, sale of BBQ Sauce as well as donations. We are near the point of being able to pay the entire project. To this end, we have now selected the type carpet, color, installer etc for the replacement of the carpet. We would like to get it installed before our busy months with outside activities. We would surely be able to use some help with moving furniture when we get started. This should not be a major item, but as they say "with many hands. . ."

We have also worked on some regular maintenance projects through the generosity of our manager and some faithful members. You will especially note changes in the men's bathroom, the folding doors that actually close now, and the bar stools that are solid. I know there are some projects remaining to be done, but those were sorely needed.

Beginning in May, the VFW will take over the Monster Burger Program. I have recovered a lot from my illness, but do not believe I can take a full afternoon and evening of the work necessary to get the job done, so am again asking for a lot of help to keep this good fundraiser going. Old blood is a main-stay. New blood is welcome. Our parking lot has taken a hit with the frost going out of the ground. We know that it is going to cost big bucks to do the repairs. We have discussed going to gravel until we can afford to do something more permanent. We are asking for your input. We know that our

membership has good ideas and we would like your opinions.

Al Sebert, Quartermaster, 229-1432  
VFW Post 17

## American Legion Commander Briefs

As I wrap up my term as Commander, I would like to thank everyone who has pitched in this past year. You make the Post what it is by your get it done attitude, and make the jobs of all the officers are made easier. One area where I am disappointed is membership. We slipped down quite a ways this past year, lets see if we can't get that trend reversed for the new Commander. On the Positive side, we were very active in that we had many activities beyond our usual events. Keep up the good work, and thanks again for a great ride.

Steven Nemmers

Commander American Legion

## Carpet Fund

As has been mentioned, we are progressing with the carpet fund and have had to bid the project with removal and replacement costs included in the bid. We were unable to muster up enough help to get the labor done for free. But we still will need help moving furniture etc. If you are so inclined please call.

## DAV

We would like to take this time to say THANK YOU to all those volunteer DAV Van drivers that have worked with us in the transportation of our Veterans.

We continue to need more drivers for the DAV Van. If anyone can help, even if it would be once a month it would be greatly appreciated.

## Monster Burgers

As an activity and fund raiser of the VFW and Legion we appreciate the involvement and attendance at the weekly event. Some see it as a reasonably priced meal, others see it as a time to visit and see friends. Regardless, activities like the Monster Burgers helps the Veterans Organizations make some additional income and also the Canteen have better till receipts. Now those are just some of the reasons, but ultimately, the goal is to have the organizations continue their existence, for what reason you ask? So that the organizations can continue to maintain and expand on Veterans Benefits and Issues. Not just the Burgers, but the use of the facility, for organizational functions, and personal activities such as wedding receptions (yes weddings too!),

anniversaries, birthday parties, business function and retreats, and reunions of all kinds. Please keep that in mind when your organization (Veterans and other) are planning to have some function. We want to be your gathering place. Please work with us--Thanks

All American Salute to the Troops  
As mentioned in the last newsletter, The All American Salute to the Troops will be held in Sioux Falls at the Lyon Fairground on June 20-21. The event recognizes Veterans from the Civil War to Present. So if you are planning to be in the area or plan to go to the event, let us know about your findings and we will try to report on it in the next newsletter.

An "All you can eat spaghetti supper for Destination ImagiNation is planned for May 15 from 5:30-7:00PM at the VFW Post Home. The fundraiser will help the Simmons and Lincoln teams and their trip to the National Contest. The organization is for elementary aged school children who plan skits, which entail the use of imagination and creative thinking. The event will help raise money for the teams that will be traveling to Knoxville, Tennessee for national competition. Good Luck Kids!!!!

**Veterans asked to register with News**  
The American News will be printing a hardbound book about Northeast South Dakota Veterans which will be published this fall. They want to include photos and information about all area Veterans past and present. There is no charge to include your Veteran in this book. Simply send a photograph and include the following information:

Veterans Name

Hometown

Current Town

Branch of Service

When

Where

Discharge Date

Rank at Discharge

Medals/Decorations/Ribbons

(It's assumed that if the Veteran has passed on that information can also be included)

The information in the American News says they also invite personal accounts of battles or other service-related stories—with or without pictures to feature in the book.

The News will take good care of the photos that are submitted and return them when they are finished and credit your contribution in the

caption. They will even take the picture for you of any Veteran items. The items must be left at the office of the news and the photos will be taken at a later date.

They also ask for:

Your name

Your address

City, State, Zip

Phone

If you are wanting to send the info, you can mail it to the Aberdeen American News, PO Box 4430 Aberdeen SD 57402-4430 OR

You can e-mail the photo and information to [hometownheros@aberdeennews.com](mailto:hometownheros@aberdeennews.com) If you have questions you can call Anne Harris at 605-622-2318 for more info.

We assume that when the Hometown Heroes Book is published that it will be available for sale from the News. But this sounds to be potentially a very large publication, so it is hoped that all of our members of all three organizations seriously consider including info about yourself, and your other Veterans in your family. Encourage friends and others to make this a once in a lifetime memorable printing.

Flag Trivia from the National Guard

--During the manufacture of the flag, the material left over is never allowed to fall upon the floor. It always falls into containers.

--The Flag planted on the moon is made of nylon and set in an aluminum frame.

--Miniature Flags of the 50 United States and 124 United Nationals were carried to the moon by astronauts and brought back to Earth. These flags were distributed by President Nixon to the governors of the states and to the heads of members of the United Nations.

--The ball at the top of the flagpole is called a "truck". On an official government installation, inside the truck is a .45 caliber bullet, a .38 caliber bullet and a bullet for an M-16 rifle. In the event the truck falls and hits the ground, it is designed to break into 13 pieces, representing the original colonies.

--At the base of each flagpole on an official government installation is a box buried in concrete. This box contains one saber, a .38 caliber pistol and a book of matches. In the event the enemy overtakes the last government installation, the survivor is to defend the flag with the saber and pistol and burn the flag with the matches so that the enemy cannot capture the flag.

--There should be no guide wires on a flagpole. It must be free standing.

**CALENDAR OF POST HOME EVENTS**

May 8-VFW Meeting 7:30PM

May 10-Wedding

May 11-Mother's Day

May 13-DAV Meeting 7PM

May 15-Spaghetti Feed

May 17-Wedding

May 18-Aman Family 1:30-5:30

May 19-Legion Meeting 8PM

May 24-Wedding

June 7-Fundraiser

June 10-DAV Meeting 7PM

June 12-VFW Meeting 7:30PM

June 13-Avera Golf Tournament

June 14-Wedding

June 15-Father's Day

June 16-Legion Meeting 8PM

June 21-Wedding

June 22-Starliters 1:30-5:30

June 28-Reunion

June 29-Pancake Feed

If you are planning a birthday, anniversary,  
wedding or party please contact Gloria Hartze at  
229-4336 or 225-9975 for bookings.