The American Legion
Sidney L Smith Post No. 24
"For God and Country"
WWW.AberdeenLegion.org
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The Gas Alarm
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Commander's Column



Fellow Legionnaires,

I want to take a few minutes to talk about the PACT(Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins) Act.

Thanks in large part to a strong push by The American Legion, and our members, the act was finally passed. It was signed into law August 10th, 2022, and is a major advancement in providing needed care to veterans exposed to toxic chemicals and radiation. In doing so, it changes eligibility for many veterans who served over the past 6 decades. While a full rundown isn't possible, more information is given on the pack page of this newsletter. The short, very important, takeaway, though, is that each veteran should reach out to their service officer and recheck their eligibility to get deserved benefits. Even if you fought for them before, and were denied, its an entirely new playing field now.

Dale Strom
Post Commander

From the Adjutant



Greetings Legionnaires!

Hope this newsletter finds each one of you doing well! Seems like spring will never show up but we all know eventually it will arrive.

Meanwhile Post 24 has been fairly busy with making plans for Burger nite on the last Monday of each month. Please join us for a good burger and the works!

Additionally we are reaching out to all Aberdeen High School Junior/Senior boys about Boys State which is held on the campus of Northern State U. from May 29 to June 2nd. Cost ($225.00) is paid by the Post 24. We do welcome sponsors which can be mailed to our PO Box 2052.

The American Legion Mid Winter Conference was held early in Feb at Huron. We heard good speakers on a variety of Veteran topics. One speaker was from the State of Maryland who noticed one important asset of SD Legionnaires - how friendly we are. I do believe that is one important asset of South Dakotans and I want to impress on all members to spread the good word wherever you go. I realize we are not perfect but we all need to strive to be welcoming with open arms with each other. We will never grow our membership if we are not.

Also the District 4 spring meeting is coming up soon. March 12th at Cresbard. 2pm at the Community Center. I encourage each member to take in this important meeting.

Congratulations are in order to Reagan Blackburn, who won 2nd at the State American Legion Oratorical Contest, which was held Sunday Feb. 12 at Huron. Reagan is a Junior at Aberdeen Central HS.

In case you missed it a few months ago we changed our meeting time from 8 pm to 7pm - in City Lights. Please attend and take in the action. Bring your ideas and learn what we are about.

In closing please "Be The One" ! The one who carries on the traditions of the American Legion serving Veterans. Also check on fellow Veterans to see if they need assistance or just to visit - the Buddy Check.

PS Please note we have a small supply of flags, plus we can order if the size you need is not on hand.

Gary Warne
Post Adjutant

Past Commander's Night Moved

Reminder, Past Commander's Night memorial will be held Wed, May 17th.

Honor Cord Presentation

The Post will be presenting Honor Cords to veterans graduating from NSU and PC this spring, at a ceremony on May 3rd in the Jewett Technology Building (corner of State St and 12th Ave). Doors will open at 5:00pm, and the ceremony is open to the public. Please wear your Legion cap if you attend.

District 4 Spring Meeting

The spring district meeting will be held in the Cresbard community center pm Saturday, March 12th. There is a social at 1:00pm, followed by a 2:00 meeting.

Legion Training

The American Legion offers an on-line class in the history of our organization, the Four Pillars, and the programs we offer. The class can be found on Mylegion.org, under Basic Training, and are done on your own pace. The course is free, but you will need to register for a My Legion account, if you don't already have one.

The Department of SD also has our own Legion College, which will be held over Zoom this year on April 22. You need to have finished the Basic Training course to apply. If interested, please email Post24@Aberdeenlegion.org for an application. Applications are due at Department HQ by March 15th

Roll Call
2022 Post Officers

Commander	Dale Strom
1st Vice Commander	Pat Steele
2nd Vice Commander	Brian Bengs
Adjutant	Gary Warne
Finance	Mel Volk
Americanism	Steve Nemmers
Chaplain	Darvin Vetter
Sergeant at Arms	Larry Ligtenberg
Asst Sgt at Arms	Sid Beckler
Children And Youth	Henry Artz
Athletics	Conald Burgard
Employment	Gary Warne
Historian	Dale Strom
Service	Pat Steele
Legal Officer	Brian Bengs
Recording Secretary	Jeff Steele

Election of Officers in April

Elections of the Post's officers happens at the April meeting. A nominations committee will present a slate of candidates, but nominations can always come off the floor at the meeting as well.

If you are interested in a post leadership role, or know of somebody you think would be, please be at the meeting.

Gun Raffle

The Post is currently selling $20 raffle tickets for 5 guns (ticket can only win once) to be given away during the 2023 Turkey Shoot, Oct 27th. Details and the list of guns can be found on the post web page (aberdeenlegion.org). If you would like tickets to sell, or for yourself, please call Mel Volk (605 / 380-0725)

Don't Forget

Our Post Meetings are 7:00pm on the 3rd Monday of each month at the Post Home (inside *City Lights*, 316 South 2nd St, Aberdeen)

PACT Act: The act can have a huge impact on Veteran's eligibility for the care they need. *Even if you don't think you're affected,* it is worth taking the time to talk with your county/tribal veterans service officer to re-explore your standing.

It adds over 20 new presumptive (don't have to prove the exposure lead to your symptoms) conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures including some radiation, and includes veterans from Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 conflicts.

See the VA website: www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/

Camp Lejeune Justice Act: Section 804 of the PACT Act allows veterans to sue the government over exposure to toxins in the water at Camp Lejeune for anyone posted there 30 days (can be non-consecutive) or more. Since this is NOT a class action, each veteran's case is handled separately, and lawyers are coming out of the woodwork to prey on Veterans, some charging 50% of claims, *plus expenses*! There are also still unanswered legal questions. If you, or someone you know, was affected, please have them contact their service officer, or TAL has made arrangements with a firm that caps their fee at 33.3%, including expenses. Go to www.camplejeunelitigationteam.com/AL

TAPS

The following veterans transferred to Post Everlasting in the past two months:

Jim Bird*

James D Herman

Mervin Christian Jung*

* Denotes a member of Post 24

The American Legion, Post #24
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Aberdeen, SD 57402-2052

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Upcoming Events:

Mar 6th (Mon) - Executive Committee meeting, 7pm in meeting room A at City Lights

Mar 12th - District Spring Meeting in Cresbard

Mar 20th (Mon) - **Post Meeting** - 7:00pm in meeting room A at City Lights event center.

Mar 27th (Mon) - Monster Burgers

Apr 3rd (Mon) - Executive Committee meeting, 7pm in meeting room A at City Lights

Apr 9th (Sun) - *Easter*

Apr 17th (Mon) - **Post Meeting** - 7:00pm in meeting room A at City Lights event center.

Apr 24th (Mon) - Monster Burgers

May 1st (Mon) - Executive Committee meeting, 7pm in meeting room A at City Lights

May 3rd (Wed) - Honor Cord ceremony, 5PM NSU

May 15th (Mon) - **Post Meeting** - 7:00pm in meeting room A at City Lights event center.

May 17th (Wed) - Past Commander's Night Memorial Service 7:00pm in the Ballroom at City Lights

May 20th (Sat) - Legion Riders "River Run"ride to Pierre

May 29th (Mon) - *Memorial Day* (program details in next newsletter)