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District 5 October Newsletter

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QUICK REFERENCE

October
10 – Commander Bill's homecoming
12 – Native American Day
24 – Make a Difference Day
31 - Halloween

November
1 – Daylight Savings Time Ends
10 – Auxiliary Birthday
11 – Veteran's Day
26 – Thanksgiving

Timm's Treasurer Tidbits

*District Dues are **$20 per year.** They are used for District Meeting Host Unit expenses, Poem and Essay awards, Gifts for the District President, District Postage costs, and any other District expenses encountered. The District Dues are NOT part of your Department obligations.
*District Dues **Payable to: District 5 American Legion Auxiliary.** *Mail to Marsha Timm, District 5 ALA Treasurer, 21645-485th Ave, Elkton SD 57026.
*Please write District Dues and your unit's **City and Unit number on the memo** line.
*Our Dues year runs from Department Convention to Department Convention. It would be best if all units pay by/at the Spring District Meeting. *Units that have paid for 2026-2027: Astoria, Big Stone City, Elkton, Milbank, Rosholt, Sisseton, Veblen, and White.



A little fun for the holiday - Do you believe in ghosts?! How about karma, coincidences, fate – heck, I'll even throw in aliens? Quick fact because, well, it is almost Halloween; about 40% of adults do. Just yesterday, we found a picture on the floor that had been on the wall for several years. Funny thing – just the day before, a conversation had been had about the topic of that picture and how it was going to end. Back in college, I gained a ghost that I named Ralph (yes, there's a story). So now when things happen, I affectionately blame it on Ralph. Do I really believe in ghosts? I'm not sure but I've definitely experienced some things that can't be explained. I'm not a horror movie kind of person either but I do like a good haunted house! Again, really no point this month, just some fun. However, does your Unit sponsor kids Halloween activities – we have for a number of years – it's pretty fun and it is a reportable activity! Get out there and do some haunting of your own this year, for a good cause, and then report it! 🎃 👻

State fair Recap – if you weren't there, you missed out on some pretty special moments (please ask me sometime)! **THANK YOU** to those that helped in anyway, covering shifts and donating! We gave out 2,274 items, spent over $600, spent approximately 60 hours of booth time, and made countless person to person contacts. This is an absolutely worthwhile project based on those in person contacts alone!
There is always one story that sticks with me and this year was no different. This is a long one… There was a couple that came to the table and were signing up for the flag give away. I asked if they had any veterans in their family. The man said yep – his dad was a Marine and served in Vietnam. I said "nice". And then he said "and my little brother was in the Army. I said "very nice – do they happen to be on the fair grounds because"… and I explained the map where they could pin their service. He looked up and said "no - no, they're not. My little brother was killed in Iraq." That right there took my breath away. And then he continued on and said " and we buried him on his 19th birthday". Now, the summer allergies hit and as best as I could, I asked them if we could put a pin on the map for him (and for his Dad). So he came over and did that. I handed him off to the Legion guys and walked away after thanking them for their sacrifice. I happen to know the Legion guys had a hard time with that one too. That is NOT an answer that you expect or that I had come across before. We had some fun stories too but this one, well, it's not likely to be forgotten. As it shouldn't.

The Girls State Governor meet and greet put on by the Raymond Unit was wonderful! Governor Quynn and Girls Nation Representatives Lilly and Emily did an awesome job telling us about their experiences. I wish more people would have been in attendance – only because those girls had so much enthusiasm and appreciation for us offering the program! They will definitely be good ambassadors for Girls State.

AMERICA 250

District V Fall Meeting – We had a very informative meeting. Thanks to the Watertown Unit for Hosting and all who attended - our attendance was down – 17 district members of 28 total present. Something that was pretty awesome – we had 7 PDPs in attendance at our mtg – they weren't all from our district but that's the most that I can remember in my 10ish years as a dist officer.

- Department President Patrice went over her year. She talked about: *Amazon Smile Program – shop on Amazon and Amazon will give a percentage to Nat'l ALA as well as Dept ALA.
  *The new SD FOCUS Award for Units. Complete a list of tasks and be entered for a chance to win $100.
  *Poem and Essay topic will be the same: How can you be a beacon of light for our Veterans?
  *Her Christmas tree theme for the Capitol will be branch uniforms through the years. Details to come.
  *Rarely applied for Unit awards
  *Membership eligibility changed to allow males based on gender neutral verbiage governing document changes.
  * power point with this info will be on the website.
- Secretary Amy – HQ now has VENMO, the program guides are done and will be coming in the HQ mailing, please save a stamp when you can by emailing when able.
- Several Dept Chairs were in attendance.
  *Rose Kraft – leadership. When there is a controversary, ask how your action is benefitting the family?
  *MaryJo Stier – NEC. There are changes to the mission and vision statements. See flyer.
  Laurel Stringer – Girls State co-chair. Money is tight; please consider sponsoring a banquet table. They are $250 but any amt will help. Let's keep letting the girls have their banquet!
  *Teresa Huntimer – 1)VA&R, 2)Chaplain. Get your service to veterans hours to her – you can claim 10 hrs/wk if you care for your spouse. Let her know if cards need to be sent to members – will not publish unless allowed.
  *Kathleen Geiman – Membership. She will be doing something with lighthouses – ours is the Blue Hill Bay Lighthouse in Maine. As our membership grows, our lighthouse on the website will be colored in accordingly.
  *Kayla Kennedy -PR. There are templates on the website for press releases – please get things in the newspapers. Small Units tend to be better off when it comes to publishing things. Social media is huge when reaching younger people. Remember to brand ourselves but stay non-political and no alcohol when wearing the emblem.
  *This wasn't reported to me until after the mtg but the Education **Give 10 for 10 is going to be Give 20 for 20** this year because it is the 20th anniversary of the program.

Membership – Ladies! We already have a Unit that is 100% - thank you to the Members in Revillo! And 2 others, Volga and Raymond are pushing 50%! Nice! I'll send a full report next month – this newsletter is fairly long as it is. But if you have questions, let me know!

*We've got a new fundraising opportunity; **Amazon Smile Associates**. Go here: American Legion Auxiliary | Shop to Support Veterans - Get Started Today - Smile Associate
Just click through the ALA's link and shop as usual on Amazon. There will be options as to where to direct your donation - every eligible purchase generates a 1.5% donation. This isn't just for us – it's for our family and friends too – just pass along the info. There will be more info coming out on this too!

Thank you to those Units that have sent in your officers! Astoria, Big Stone, Britton, Clark, Elkton, Estelline, Grenville, Langford, Milbank, New Effington, Raymond, Rosholt, Sisseton, Strandburg, Veblen, Volga, Watertown, White, and Wilmot. **If you are not on this list, PLEASE send me your officers! Even an email or phone call saying they're the same is good.** And don't forget to update your meeting times. At least one good email contact from your Unit would be helpful too! There are always forwards from chairmen and extra attachments in an email vs the snail mail version.

With this Newsletter, you will find:
*Amazon Smile info sheet
*FOCUS award info sheet
*Mail questionnaire
*New mission statement from Nat'l
*Dist Business sheet from mtg
If you have any questions or have an event coming up, please let me know! I'd be happy to check it out or even put it in the next newsletter.





Make A Difference Day falls on October 24th this year. This holiday was founded in 1992 when USA Weekend suggested to its readers that they should do something good for their community or for those in need. They reasoned that since 1992 was a leap year, and therefore the year had an extra day, they should put it to good use for someone else. It didn't take long for that idea to spread like wildfire and people began to observe it. This holiday got its biggest push when Points of Light – an international nonprofit, nonpartisan organization decided to promote this holiday as well. Ever since then, it's been a holiday that helps people to make a difference in their communities and the lives of others. Not an earth-shattering concept but one that can make an important impact on somebody's life. Do something and then report it!

Wreaths Across America – There always used to be a form to fill out and they had a deadline to purchase by but I could find neither of those two items. I did however find the website and there is quite a bit of information about the program. If this has been something that your Unit or individual members have supported, please pass this link on to them. https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/pages/170934/Overview/?relatedId=167577

WREATHS across AMERICA

Christmas is coming. That means the Sioux Falls VA Christmas Gift Shop will be coming soon. Please consider going shopping or sending in a donation. The dates are Monday November 30 and Tuesday Dec 1st,2026. Monday we set up at 730am, Veterans shop at 9am until 4pm. Tuesday Veterans Shop 9am until 4 pm. Then we have to clean up what was left over. Veterans will shop for themselves and family. I always need volunteers to wrap gifts or to help the Veteran's shop, come help for an hour or stay as long as you want. Ideas for gifts are warm clothing men and women, slippers, gloves, hats, watches, bath and kitchen towels, throws, insulated mugs, card games, board games, kids games and throws, anything patriotic, these are just suggestions there are many other gifts to buy. Do Not send any liquids or glass items. If you are making a money donation please send to State Headquarters and put SF VA Gift Shop in memo line. If you have gifts to donate please contact me, I am ready to store gifts anytime. The VA does not want the gifts dropped off at the VA. Thank you for all the support for the Sioux Falls VA Christmas Gift Shop. Julie Weinmann cell 605-941-7587

And because our District is the only one that is split between 2 facilities, here is that list:

Sioux Falls VA: District 5: Astoria, Aurora, Bradley, Brookings, Bryant, Carpenter, Castlewood, Clark, Clear Lake, Elkton, Estelline, Gary, Raymond, Toronto, Volga, Watertown, Webster, White, Willow Lake

Hot Springs VA: District 5: Big Stone City, Britton, Grenville, Langford, Milbank, New Effington, Pierpont, Revillo, Rosholt, Roslyn, Sisseton, Strandburg, Veblen, Waubay, Wilmot

Hot Springs VA Christmas Gift Shop – November 18-19; Deb MacDonald 605-484-0904

