



2026 – 2027

KAREN SHARP
DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT
VFW AUXILIARY
JULY 2026 NEWS



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY

DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

KAREN SHARP, PRESIDENT

GENERAL ORDERS

JULY 2026

First of all, I wish to thank everyone for giving me this tremendous honor and privilege to once again serve as South Dakota Department President. I hope I can live up to all your expectations. It is going to “Bee” Fantastic!

As this is the beginning of our 2026 – 2027 year, there is much to do.

AUDIT for the fourth (1/4) quarter (April 1 – June 30) is to be completed by July 31, 2026. It is recommended that the outgoing Treasurer and Trustee be invited to the audit.

BOND is due and payable. Please do so by July 31st. Remember both the President and Secretary should have copies of the Bond in their records.

E990 can now be filed. If it is done now, you won’t forget.

DONATIONS may be submitted to Department Treasurer, Nancy Chester. The sooner, the better.

STANDING RULES are to be reviewed. After any changes, if any, motion to adopt as revised.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT’S VISIT will be in Pierre **August 21, 2026**. More details to follow.

FALL COUNCIL and SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION are scheduled to be held in Rapid City September 25 and 26. Going to try some new things this year. Come and see what we have done.

SHIRTS: I am going to place another order for Commander Rick and my shirts. The order will be for both VFW and Auxiliary shirts. Price is \$25 each. Please let me know how many, what size and if for the VFW or the Auxiliary by July 15. You may send a check to me at 310 Port Charlotte Ave., Fort Pierre, SD 57532.

WEBSITE (VFWAUXSD.ORG): We will be communicating lots through the website: vfwauxsd.org. There will be lots of information there. Check it out often and utilize this great tool. If you have suggestions, please let us know.

TINY HOUSES is Commander Rick and my Project for this year. There is a raffle that you personally and/or your Auxiliary may participate in by either buying or selling raffle tickets. Monetary donations, both personal or by Auxiliary are also acceptable. Perhaps your Auxiliary wants to do a fund raiser with the proceeds to go to the project. Send your donations to Nancy Chester, Department Treasurer.

Happy 4th of July to everyone. This is a big year. Enjoy and Be Safe.

Karen Sharp



Chief of Staff July 2026



To all VFW Auxiliary Members – I'm just buzzing in to help start President Karen's wonderful hive full of busy bees.

Pat Cerny, Department Chief of Staff, lives in Yankton and am currently Secretary and Chaplain of VFW Post 791 Auxiliary. Married to Bill and he too is Past everything.

As a worker bee, I have served as District President of two Districts (not at the same time!), Dept Pres. in 1992-93; National Council of Administration 1996-98; Natl. Publicity Director 1998 and Natl Legislative Dir. 1999, plus some Big Ten offices.

One of the questions I asked myself numerous times – where do the VFW AUX lapel pins go and what side? So here goes –

Official Look Bylaws Sec. 1001 – marine blue shirt – long or short sleeve, worn with black slacks or skirt, and black shoes. The lapel pins – I always remember “the VFW goes over my heart”, which puts that pin on the left. Pin on straight, do not slant. That leaves the AUX pins on the right. Easy. If you are placing the pins with the shirt laying down, remember how it will look when you put it on.

If you have the official emblem on your shirt, your current membership pin goes just above it. If you are sporting an American Flag pin – it ALWAYS goes above all pins and or emblem.

Nametags go on the right side. There is a good picture in the Booklet of Instructions V) By law Section 1002 will explain the membership pins, what each color stone designates.

Section 2003 explains the Auxiliary Emblem and Logo.

The incoming President's pin cannot be worn until she/he is sworn in at National Convention.

We are going to BEE the most correct BEES Buzzing around the Department.



UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

South Dakota Department VFW Auxiliary
Veterans & Family Support Welcome Information 2026-27

www.vfwauxsd.org

Tammy Chase – 45980 SD Hwy 10 – Sisseton, SD 57262

cbchase@venturecomm.net

home: 605.698.7438 cell: 605.742.4179

Program Goals for 2026-2027

VFW National Veterans Service (NVS)

Military Appreciation Program (MAP)

VFW Veterans & Military Support Programs

Assist Veterans, Service Members & their Families

Promote Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Awareness

#1

July 2026

If you do anything within your auxiliary it more than likely will fall under the Veterans & Family Support Program. It is the reason we do what we do. Remember – everything we do as an Auxiliary at every level is to support Veterans and/or their families, now you just have to report it and that is the easiest part.

I would like to thank President Karen for asking me to be the chairman for Veterans & Family Support. It is very near and dear to my heart and an important program and I'm very honored! So lets Rock it this year!

I'm Tammy Chase from Sisseton, South Dakota. I work full-time at an insurance agency in Sisseton. My husband served in the National Guard for 21 years and retired from the State DOT in February. I'm very involved in volunteering. I volunteer for the South Dakota National Guard Family Program, National Guard Bureau Volunteer Training Team (VTT), local organizations in Sisseton both military and civic.

Starting in August we will talk about our program and what we support. Do you know what NVS and MAP's are? We will talk about them and other goals we want to accomplish for the year. I will also have a special program that I will talk about every month – to be announced in the August Program notes.

Lets work together and ROCK THIS YEAR!

Tammy Chase
45980 SD HWY 10 Sisseton,
SD 57262 605-698-7438 605-
742-4179
[**cbchase@venturecomm.net**](mailto:cbchase@venturecomm.net)

SD VFW Auxiliary
Veterans & Family Support



SCAN ME



Historian & Media Relations July 2026

Kim Vennard, Chairman
kjv57103@gmail.com



Welcome to the exciting world of maintaining your auxiliary history!!!

You are the keeper of recording your past and present.

We need to keep our story alive for the new members. Let them know who we are and why we do what we do and where we have been!!

I am Kim Vennard from Sioux Falls. I am very honored to be the SD chairman. I have been maintaining Webpage and Facebook page for the department. We are going to have some changes this year and an exciting program.

National Ambassador Teresa Stevenson has challenged all Auxiliaries to create a unique digital record of their Auxiliary history to be published electronically for the future members. So dig back in to your archives, interview your seasoned members. Make it Fun!! Make it Creative!! Make it Stand Out!!



Historians are your record and memory keepers!!

When posting on Social Media or the webpage.. Make sure to document the 5 W's ,, (we learned them in grade school)!!

Who?	Name the people in the photos
What?	Describe the event
When?	The date of event
Where?	Location of the event
Why?	Reason for having the event



Just a little bit of added information makes your recording go from dull to interesting!!

How many times do you look at a post and say... "I wonder who that is??"

By posting names, now you can say, "THAT'S who that is!!" I wondered what they looked like!!

Always make sure to have a signed waiver to post photos on public platforms.

Waivers are available on the Historian Page in Malta.

Support Today's Veterans and Military

Please contact or visit your congressional representatives and stress that these are the issues we will be fighting for in the 119th Congress. These priority goals reflect the resolutions passed and supported by the men and women of the VFW and its auxiliary. To find your congressional representatives, visit vfw.org/ActionCorps.

Play a Role in the Process

Engage and help us ensure that these priority goals are enacted. Sign up today for the VFW weekly e-newsletter and VFW Action Alerts:

- Visit vfw.org/JoinActionCorps
- Text "VFW" to 50457*
- Scan QR code below

*Messaging and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies.
Reply HELP and STOP to unsubscribe.



**NO ONE DOES MORE
FOR VETERANS.**

*Delivering the promise to our
veterans, service members
and their families.*



VFW National Headquarters

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
816.756.3390

VFW Washington Office

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202.543.2239

VFW.ORG



2026
**PRIORITY
GOALS**



Budget

To fully fund relevant programs for veterans, service members and their families, Congress must:

- Hold leaders accountable to “Honor the Contract” and uphold their end of the military service contract by opposing any effort to cut or reduce veteran benefits.
- Ensure sufficient, timely appropriations and proper budget oversight for VA.
- Authorize VA to receive reimbursements from TRICARE and Medicare.
- Never reduce one veteran’s benefits to pay for another.
- Modernize and reform VA and DOD programs that do not meet the needs of service members, veterans and families.

Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs

To ensure veterans and their survivors have timely access to earned benefits, Congress and VA must:

- Implement the VFW’s recommendations to improve the VA disability claims process, specifically appeals, digital claims, DBQs and disability examinations.
- Crack down on unaccredited claims consultants known as Claim Sharks.
- Study all toxic and environmental exposures, and implement programs to ensure health care and benefits are provided to all exposed service members and veterans.
- Increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, burial allowances and other benefits for survivors.
- Improve the accuracy of disability compensation claims related to military sexual trauma.

Education, Employment and Transition Assistance

To ensure veterans succeed after leaving military service, Congress, VA, DOD and DOL must:

- Improve education benefits through modernized student housing and supply allowances, child care stipends, parity for National Guard and Reserve members and elimination of delimiting dates.
- Improve the delivery of the Veteran Readiness and Employment program to include administrative support for counselors and standardized training.
- Ensure parity of VA and DOD education programs with other federal programs.
- Expand small business, hiring preference, tax incentives and entrepreneurship resources for veterans and military spouses.
- Increase funding for HUD-VASH vouchers, grant and per diem payments and pilot programs to combat veteran homelessness.
- Conduct oversight of VA’s Transition Assistance Program to ensure compliance with the law, and require the inclusion of accredited claims representatives.
- Protect the VA Home Loan Guaranty program and expand it to the reserve components.
- Eliminate red tape preventing effective use of education and employment benefits.

National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA

To fully support the all-volunteer force, protect our nation’s citizens and defend American interests around the world, Congress and DOD must:

- Ensure DPAA is fully funded to perform its personnel recovery mission.
- Deter threats to our national security by supporting our allies in Ukraine, Israel, Korea and Taiwan.
- Ensure all service members who served in harm’s way—to include foreign nationals, translators and allies—receive the recognition, care and benefits they may have earned.

Health Care

To ensure service members and veterans receive timely access to high-quality health care without increasing cost shares, Congress, VA and DOD must:

- Eliminate service member and veteran suicide.
- Improve the coordination of community care at VA, including CHAMPVA and the Foreign Medical Program.
- Strengthen care and research for mental health, blast overpressure and traumatic brain injuries.
- Research the efficacy of alternative therapies for PTSD.
- Improve oversight of Vet Centers to ensure adequate staffing, resources and funding.
- Enhance programs and services for women and underserved veterans.
- Preserve the integrity of TRICARE.
- Properly implement VA and DOD health IT systems.
- Expand nursing home eligibility and long-term care options.

Military Readiness

To maintain a strong and ready all-volunteer force capable of protecting American interests, Congress and DOD must:

- Enhance quality of life and health care programs that allow service members to focus on the mission.
- Ensure equity of benefits for reserve component service members.
- End the military retirement pay and VA disability compensation offset.
- Provide benefits enrollment for all transitioning service members.
- Eliminate sexual assault and harassment from the military.
- Increase military base pay so that it is competitive with relevant civilian pay.
- Ensure that military housing and work spaces are safe and modern.
- Eliminate food insecurity in the military.

VFW National Home

July 2026



Happy New Auxiliary Year!! And Welcome to the "NEW" SD VFW Auxiliary National Home Program Promotion Page.

While the VFW National Home is not "NEW", this year they will have their own program category.

For those of you that do not know me, I promise you will by the end of the year!! I am Kim Vennard from Sioux Falls. I am very honored to be your chairman and kick off this new program.



I challenge each of you to show our National Ambassador Mary Anne Kruetz that while SD may be small, we can do big things!!!

I'm looking forward to an amazing year!!

3 Challenges for SD Auxiliaries

Promote the VFW National Home

- Be Creative
- Explain what the Natl Home is
- Let people know who is eligible to receive services

Promote to Auxiliary Members and Non-Members

Each Auxiliary is encouraged to purchase one or more Tribute Bricks at the National Home to honor a member, a non-member or their Auxiliary.

\$100

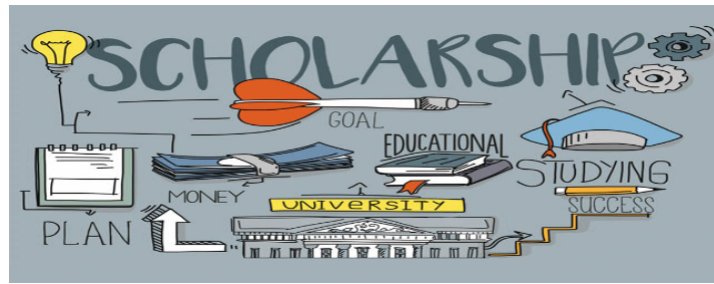
Each Auxiliary is encouraged to purchase one or more Lifetime Memberships for an Auxiliary or Post Member.

\$100

Stay tuned for additional information on the Challenges. I do have a list of all SD Lifetime Members and those that have Tribute Bricks currently at National Home. I will be emailing that information to all Presidents.

**Kim Vennard
SD VFW National Home Chairman
kjb57103@gmail.com**





Promotions July 2026 SCHOLARSHIPS 2026-2027

My name is Margaret Greenfield, and I am honored to be your Dept of SD Scholarships Chairman for the ensuing year. My husband, Dale Greenfield, is my co-partner on the post side. We will be working side by side. By working together let's make this a great year for our State Commander and State President. I am looking forward to working with each of you.

There are a total of 5 scholarships available through the VFW and VFW Auxiliary: Voice of Democracy (VFW), Patriot's Pen (VFW), National VFW Auxiliary Continuing Education Scholarship (Auxiliary), Department of South Dakota Continuing Education Scholarship (Auxiliary), and Young American Creative Patriotic Art (Auxiliary) (two categories: 2-Dimensional and 3-Dimensional). The information you will need for your year-end reports for each scholarship is already available on our website as "Scholarships Year End Report 2026-2027."

All scholarships have their own deadlines and requirements, which are available at:

<https://vfwauxsd.org> under "Programs" then "Scholarships"

In MALTA Membership Resources <https://malta.vfwauxiliary.org>

Please remember to read through all requirements for the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen.

☐ **Voice of Democracy Scholarship (essay and oral presentation)**

Theme **"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA?"**

Post/Auxiliary Deadline: October 31, 2026

District Deadline: November 22, 2026

Department Deadline: December 6, 2026

National Deadline: December 13, 2026

☐ **Patriot's Pen Essay Scholarship**

Theme **"WHAT A VETERAN TAUGHT ME ABOUT AMERICA?"**

Post/Auxiliary Deadline: October 31, 2026

District Deadline: November 22, 2026

Department Deadline: December 6, 2026

National Deadline: December 13, 2026

☐ **Continuing Education Scholarship**

Department Deadline: February 15, 2027

National Deadline: February 15, 2027

☐ **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship**

2-Dimensional

Post/Auxiliary Deadline March 31, 2027

Department Deadline: April 15, 2027

National Deadline: May 5, 2027

3-Dimensional

Post/Auxiliary Deadline March 31, 2027

Department Deadline: April 15, 2027

National Deadline: May 5, 2027

Dept Chairman Margaret Greenfield 20539 401ST Ave., Huron, SD 57350 (605) 350-5254 m.greenfield69@myyahoo.com



The VFW of Michigan Welcomes the
Departments of the Big Ten Conference
to the 2026 Annual Meeting
October 16-18, 2026 in Kalamazoo, MI.

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Michigan

Minnesota

Missouri

Nebraska

Ohio

South Dakota

Wisconsin



yes, there really is a
kalamazoo

**2026 BIG TEN CONFERENCE
VFW AND AUXILIARY
ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETING
Friday October 16, 2026 – Sunday October 18, 2026
Conference Meeting Registration Form**

Registration Fee: \$175.00 per person

Registration Fee includes:

Friday night: **Heavy Hors d'oeuvres with cash bar**
 Fun group Trivia Pursuit
 (State Teams: MI & SD, IN & IL,
 WI & MN, MO & IA, OH & NE)
 Musical entertainment

Saturday Morning Breakfast Buffet
Saturday Noon Lunch Buffet
Saturday Night Banquet with cash bar

Name 1: _____

Department: _____ **VFW** _____ **Aux** _____

Office: _____

Name 2: _____

Department: _____ **VFW** _____ **Aux** _____

Office: _____

Pay by check: **payable to:** **VFW Department of Michigan**
 924 N Washington
 Lansing, MI 48906

Pay by credit card: **Email: 2026btconference@vfwmi.vet**

Credit Card Type: MC ____ VISA ____ Discover ____ AMEX ____

Card number: _____ **Exp Date:** _____

Additional registrations please use additional form

**2026 BIG TEN CONFERENCE
VFW AND AUXILIARY
ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETING
FridayOctober16,2026 - SundayOctober18, 2026**

HOUSING INFORMATION

Radisson Plaza Hotel
100 W. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo MI 49007
Phone 269-343-3333

- Room Block will open on January 2, 2026
- Cutoff date is September 23, 2026 or when block fills, whichever occurs first.
- Please make your reservations as soon as possible after block opens.

To reserve your room, please call 269-343-3333
Reservations must be guaranteed with a major credit card.

When calling to make your reservation to receive the group rate, you must identify yourself as a VFW DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN BIG TEN 2026 CONFERENCE ATTENDEE.

A credit card and valid photo identification will be required upon check-in.

Room availability check in time is 4:00 pm
Check out time is 12:00 noon

Standard Rooms (2 queen beds): \$ 131.00

King Rooms (single king bed): \$ 131.00

Suites: \$ 181.00

Rates are subject to 6% StateTax And 5%, Occupancy Tax

Valet parkingis available.

Public self -parking access viaskywalk to the hotel is available.

If you require assistance or have a questionplease contact Jan at 517-485-9456 or by email at **2026btconference@vfwmi.vet**

**2026 BIG TEN CONFERENCE
VFW AND AUXILIARY
ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETING**

Friday 16, October 2026 – Sunday 18, October 2026

Transportation Assistance Request Form

The Department of Michigan will provide complimentary transportation to and from Kalamazoo Airport and the Kalamazoo AMTRAC Station beginning at 3:00 pm on Thursday thru all departures on Sunday.

To be scheduled for transportation please provide the following information:

First and last name of each person on this trip request:

AMTRACor name of Airline: _____

ArrivalDate: Time: Air Flight#:

Departure Date: Time: Air Flight#:

Email Address and cell phone # of primary contact person in this group:
