

POST 15 NEWS



July 2022

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COMMANDER'S CORNER—*Bill Peters*

Just returned from the State Convention and trying to stay out of the heat. I spent a day in Aberdeen for Legion Day at Boys State. It was my 1st time at Boys State and it was a great experience. The kids and the staff truly appreciate the blue hats visiting. I encourage you to spend a day at Boys State in 2023. Blue hat day is always Thursday. I also plan to attend Youth Trooper Academy Blue Hat Day in Pierre on June 23. Governor Noem addressed the Legionnaires at the State Convention. She will do everything she can to support Boys State and Girls State. Thank you, Governor Noem, for your support. We also heard from National Commander Candidate Daniel Seehafer, Department of Wisconsin. Dan's message was "Be the One." We all need to look in the mirror and say, "What can I do?" PTSD continues to be our concern. A friend of mine told me a relative of his went to check in at the Emergency Room and took his life at the front door. The staff was not successful in saving him. Suicide has touched many of us in some way. It is so important we do everything we can, not only for our Veterans, but for our non-veteran friends. Sometimes, if we can give someone five more minutes it may be all he or she needs. I tell you this story to say how important Buddy Checks are. A phone call may be all one may need to know you care. Having said that, the Legion passed the following Resolution: "RESOLVED, By American Legion Post 136, in regular meeting assembled in Chester, South Dakota December 13, 2021, That Post 136 recommends the American Legion Department of South Dakota strongly encourages suicide awareness and prevention training at the post level; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That posts are strongly encouraged to seek out qualified trainers and invite them to provide training for their Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family." Leadership will be working on having someone come to talk to us in the near future about suicide. In closing, thank you all for what you do for the Legion, our Veterans and Post 15. A special thank you to Dale Hill, Barry Andrés, Jim McQuisten, John Bachmeier, Bob Johnson, and also our permanent guest Diane Diekman for taking their time to attend the State Convention. Post 15 came home with 100% American Legion Family Ribbons and was the only Post to receive all 4 ribbons! Thank you all for keeping up the good work. We also came home with 2nd Place for our Newsletter. This is the 1st time we have received this recognition. Thank you to Diane for putting the newsletter together and to everyone for your articles. Reminder that there will not be a Membership Meeting in July. See you in August.

UNIT 15 AUXILIARY

Kellie Heazlett, President

The summer is a busy time for all of us. We will not have a meeting in July. We do have several events we will need volunteers for:

July 3 – Post 15 Pancake breakfast and Unit 15 Bake Sale. We appreciate your baked goods. We also need 1 or 2 volunteers.

July 4 – A Flag retirement ceremony will be held at the Fairgrounds at 9pm. Starting at 7pm, we will have a recruiting table. Please wear a shirt, hat, or pin that identifies you as an Auxiliary member.

July 9 – Family day picnic for the 235th at the Post, beginning at 12 pm. There will be a speaker at 1 pm for the adults, while the kids play games. We will need at least four volunteers to work with the kids and to help cook and clean up. We are seeking donations for gift bags/prizes.

July 27-30 – Legion Post 15 Rummage Sale. Hours are 8 am-6 pm – Wed, Thurs, Fri and 8 am-12 pm Saturday. We will have a bake sale and sell drinks. We need baked good donations (please no single crust pies, due to the heat) and volunteers to staff the bake sale.

If you can volunteer or would like to chair any coming events, please contact me at 605-310-9993 or kellie-heazlett@hotmail.com.

I hope everyone has a fantastic Independence Day!

GO-GETTERS CLUB

Dale Hill, 1st Vice Commander

Post 15 has several activities in July and August. Please help when you can. On July 4, we need 3-4 members who can carry colors/rifles for the parade. That evening, we need 5 members for the flag retirement ceremony before the fireworks at the fairgrounds, 5 for Color Guard, and 6 members to sell raffle tickets at the entrances to the grandstands before the fireworks. Military Appreciation Night at Har-madan Park is Wednesday July 6 (will need 4-5 for Color Guard and 3-4 to sell raffle tickets). Please let me or Sue know when you can help.

Go-Getters will meet Thursday July 7 at 7:00 pm at the Post. The picnic for the 235th will be Saturday July 9 – we need help cooking burgers, brats and hot dogs, along with helping kids and adults with indoor and outdoor activities – estimated time frame is 1000-1500. I need 4-5 members to help.

Wings of Valor near Parker is having a workday on Saturday, July 16, starting at 0900. The address is 45618 278th St, Parker SD 57053. They need a few workers with chainsaws; otherwise bring rakes and shovels. Let Sue know if you are going so they will have enough food for lunch.

The second AutoMania is Saturday, July 30, at the Sanford Center (need members to sell raffle tickets). Membership renewal notices will start being mailed after July 1. Your continuing support of the American Legion and programs help fellow veterans and help build leaders of tomorrow. Today we are in challenging times as a Nation, but we have weathered storms before. With guidance from above, we will get through these rough waters .

LEGISLATIVE NOTES

Diane Diekman

The Senate voted 84-14 on June 16 to approve the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson **Honoring Our PACT Act**, which would extend health care and disability benefits to an estimated 3.5 million veterans exposed to burn pits and other airborne hazards. The bill must still pass the House and be signed by President Joe Biden, but the Senate was the biggest hurdle, and the bill is now expected to pass. South Dakota Senators Thune and Rounds voted against it. --*Military.com*

Senators from West Virginia, New Mexico, South Dakota, and New Hampshire have introduced **legislation to eliminate the VA Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission**, which has recommended closing numerous VA medical centers and clinics, mostly in rural states, and constructing new ones in regions where veterans are relocating, largely in the South and West. The medical centers slated for closure include areas where the veteran population is expected to decline. The \$2 trillion proposal calls for the VA to reduce services in West Virginia, close two VA hospitals in South Dakota, and shutter three outpatient clinics in New Mexico. --*Military.com*

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance is a **new VA life insurance policy** for veterans of any level of disability rating. VALife will be launched Jan. 1, 2023, and will be open to all veterans 80 years old or younger who have a disability rating of 0 to 100. Older veterans will be eligible if they applied for VA disability but did not receive the disability rating until after turning 81. It is a guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance with no medical exams or health questions required, but these plans have lower benefits and higher premiums than other life insurance policies. The new insurance policy was created by a bill signed into law in January 2021 called the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act. --*Military.com*

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SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION



New member Zachery Husman attended Boys State and is now a counselor for the yearly event. He has decided to join POST 15's Sons of the Legion. Welcome, Zach. We wish the best to SAL member John Costello as he enters the Air Force Academy. Who is eligible to be a SAL? Check it out here: <https://www.legion.org/sons/about> Who can you share this opportunity with?

July 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Office is open 11-3 pm M-F	A = event at Alliance				1	2 Coffee/Donuts with Veterans 8:30 am
3 Legion Pancake Breakfast & Bake Sale 8:30-noon—A	4 <i>Independence Day</i>	5 NO Post 15 meeting	6 Ladies' Bridge 12-4 pm	7 Go-Getters meeting 7 pm	8	9 Coffee/Donuts with Veterans 8:30 am
10	11 Singing Legionnaires Practice 7 pm	12 NO Legion Aux. meeting	13 Ladies' Bridge 12-4 pm Legion Riders 7 pm	14 Sons of the Legion 7 pm	15	16 Coffee/Donuts with Veterans 8:30 am
17	18 Singing Legionnaires Practice 7 pm	19 Legionnaires <i>only</i> : Social 5:30 pm—A Dinner 6:30 pm	20 Ladies' Bridge 12-4 pm	21	22	23 Coffee/Donuts with Veterans 8:30 am
24	25 Singing Legionnaires Practice 7 pm	26 VFW/Legion Auxiliary*** Social 5 pm—A Dinner 6 pm—A	27 Ladies' Bridge 12-4 pm <i>Rummage sale</i>	28 <i>Rummage sale</i>	29 <i>Rummage sale</i>	30 Coffee/Donuts with Veterans 8:30 am <i>Rummage sale</i>
31		***Open to the public; reservations required for dinner				

PAID UP FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP—PUFL

AGE	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79
	\$1535	\$1399	\$1229	\$1025	\$815	\$599
	80-89	90+				
	\$429	\$329				

The total amount can be divided into 12 equal monthly payments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PAID UP FOR LIFE PROGRAM, CONTACT CUSTOMER SERVICE AT 1-800-433-3318 OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.LEGION.ORG/JOIN/PUFL](http://www.legion.org/join/PUFL).

JULY MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL

Members Only—No Guests

Tuesday, July 19—At the Alliance

Social hour: 5:30 / Dinner: 6:30

Tony's Catering— \$9.00

Reservations requested—call the office

James Thuringer was not present when his name was called for \$375 at the June membership social. This month's drawing will be for **\$400**. **Gene Schnider** won the \$20 hat drawing. **Pete Waldner** won the monthly gun raffle.

CHORUS NOTES *Len Neugebauer*

On Memorial Day, severe weather forced the Singing Legionnaires to cancel the posting of flags and to move their performance to the Alliance from the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, as was planned. On June 20, the chorus performed at the Good Samaritan Society - Hearthstone Assisted Living at 4001 S. Marion Road in Sioux Falls. Performances scheduled for July are as follows: July 6 ,singing the National Anthem for American Legion baseball at Harmodon Field #1; July 10 at St. Mark's Lutheran 10am service; July 24 at Grace Lutheran 9am service; all in Sioux Falls. The chorus continues with special activities in observance of its 75th anniversary during 2022. The chorus posted flags on June 14 Flag Day and will post flags on July 4, Independence Day. If anyone knows of a business in Sioux Falls that would like to sponsor American flags to be flown by the chorus on holidays special to veterans, call Todd Schmidt at (605) 370-4405. Anyone interested in singing with the chorus or with questions regarding chorus activities, feel free to contact chorus president Bruce Naasz at (605) 310-6210 or by email at 66cyclor2019@gmail.com.



Department Commander Gary Wolkow and Press Association President Charemon Dunham presenting newsletter editor Diane Diekman with Post 15's 2nd Place Award for Post Newsletter.

HONOR GUARD COMMANDER

Bill Peters

Post 15 continues to bury our veterans and all members who give of their time and talents to make this happen are appreciated. Thank you, Jim Minnig, for taking care of our rifles. We continue to receive notes and phone calls telling us how professional the POST 15 honor guard is. The families appreciate that we have a full honor guard to lay their loved ones to rest. Our honor guard members are some of the most active members in our post. Three of them will be participating (with 5 others) in Tee It Up For the Troops Golf Tournament in July. They represented us last year in the same tournament. This year the POST has been selected as one of the recipients of funds from the tournament. When you see an honor guard member, please thank them for their dedication.



Post 15 Past Commander John Bachmeier accepting 100% American Legion family membership award from Department Commander Gary Wolkow and 7th District Commander Pat Mullen. Sioux Falls Post 15 was the only post with all four Legion family members achieving 100% membership goal: Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and Legion Riders.

\$100 DRAWINGS FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

All Post 15 members who renew by September 15 (and all PUFL members) will be eligible for five \$100 cash drawings. National begins mailing renewal notices July 1 and sends them EVERY month. So you will have had two or three notices by September 15. Mark your calendars now to pay your annual dues on July 1 of each year.

RENEW ONLINE

All American Legion members can pay their dues online at <https://www.legion.org/>. Use a credit card, and print your membership card. For more information, call the office at 605-336-3470, email legionoffice.al@gmail.com, or stop in at 1700 W Russell Street from 11 am-3 pm Monday-Friday.

LEGION RIDERS

Lamar Nance, Chairman

We welcomed guest Keith Aust to the Legion Riders. We had a great run to Sioux City for Thunder on the Missouri. It was an incredible, awe-inspiring, and humbling event. Our website at <http://siouxfallslegionriders.yolasite.com/> has information regarding membership, some great pictures of past events, and the Legion calendar. Upcoming rides include escorting the Traveling Vietnam Wall from Dimmock to Parkston (June 29), Lennox Independence Day Parade (July 4), and Big Paws Poker Run—Benefit for Companion Dogs for Veterans (July 23). Anyone who rides a motorcycle and is a member of the Legion, Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of the Legion is invited to join us. Our meetings are the 2nd Wednesday at 7:00 pm at the Post home. Keep the shiny side up!



USS South Dakota (BB 57)
Crew Member Reunion
80th Anniversary of Ship Commissioning
Saturday, **August 13, 2022**, 10 am
Book signing to follow at 2 pm

Guest Speaker at both events:
Paul Stillwell, author of
Battleship Admiral: The Life of Vice Admiral Willis A Lee Jr.

Battleship South Dakota Memorial
West 12th St & Kiwanis Avenue

Public is invited—*free admission*



Thanks to all the Legion members and other volunteers who helped put out over 3,000 flags before Memorial Day. Another group of faithful volunteers picked them up the next week. I volunteered to chair this project two years ago. It is the "one thing" I can do for my post. For many of us this is an annual event. If you would like your name on the list, let me know. Please consider becoming active - that doesn't mean doing something weekly. I do this once a year. Consider volunteering for one of the things listed in this newsletter. —Ron Lien, Navy - Persian Gulf

Membership

75 NEW MEMBERS IN 2022
52 DECEASED MEMBERS IN 2022
08 TRANSFERRED OUT
86 TRANSFERRED IN
45 transfers are from the state 500 pool—veterans who join online and don't get assigned to a post. Thank you to Dale Haas and Sue Peters for contacting them with an invitation to transfer to POST 15.

WE ARE PLUS 101 FOR 2022. Without the 45 from the 500 pool, we would be at +56, an increase in membership of only 4. This is why recruiting is so important. Almost 200 of our members are from the WWII/Korea era. To keep POST 15 healthy, we need to recruit 200 members in 2022. Whom do you know that you can personally ask to become a member of POST 15?

June 10, 2022

From: Sioux Falls American Legion Post 15 Officers

To: All Post 15 members

Subject: Executive Board Strategic Planning Meetings

Post 15 Officers and Executive Board conducted 2 strategic planning meetings; one on May 16 and another on May 23, 2022 at the Post. We utilized an outside facilitator to help guide us through this process and to help keep us focused. The objective was to look into the crystal ball and have a vision for Post 15 in 3-5 years. After some intense discussions, we decided to focus our activities and efforts on 3 of the American Legion Pillars – Americanism, Youth, and Veterans. It was very clear from our discussions that we cannot be all things to all veterans. We are a volunteer organization, and we need to focus on those areas within each Pillar that we can reasonably accomplish, meaning we focus on those activities that we can get enough member volunteers and have the financial means to support.

We acknowledged the transition over the last few years with the closing of the previous facility (with significant loss of written and financial records in the move to the Alliance, and significant loss of historical knowledge of how some of our programs were run). Even with those setbacks, Post 15 has made it through those challenges and our membership is growing.

With this backdrop, the strategic planning resulted in three areas that the Officers and Executive Board members see as the primary focus over the next 3-5 years.

The first focus area is membership – we need to have more membership engagement. There is a small core of members who do 95% of the work. We ask that each member contribute in any way that they can – some of our older members may only be able to help by attending membership meetings, social dinners, pancake breakfasts, and some only by maintaining membership. We need more members to help at pancake breakfasts, Honor Guard, Color Guard, raffle ticket sales, cemetery flags for Memorial Day, gun shows, and Legion baseball games. We need help at Benson's Flea Market, Sioux Empire Fair, and other public venues to help get the message out that the Legion is NOT a bunch of old guys at the bar. Some volunteering is as simple as directing traffic and parking at car show events that the Post receives a donation for. If we have more members helping, even for a few hours per year, or only with specific projects, it will make a BIG difference.

We need to make sure that we have activity co-chairs - it often takes more than one person. Each person takes care of one part of the activity instead of one person getting burned out by trying to do everything. Our biggest challenge is when the Post membership decides to support an activity, we must know WHO IS WE!!! The membership roster does not list any member with the name WE.

If you have special talents that you could contribute to Post 15, let us know. We sometimes need expertise for legal, accounting, fund raising, cooking, grilling, building maintenance, automotive repair, light yard work or other talents or areas of interest. Call the Legion office at 605-336-3470 to let us know how you might be able to help the Post and other members.

Establishing special interest groups somewhat based on age and military conflicts members were involved in was discussed. The objective is to find more common ground among members, and to plan more focused activities for each special interest group - firing range, archery, fun runs, obstacle course, golf league, etc. Do you have additional ideas?

The last area of membership that we need to focus on is retaining our current members and recruiting younger members by doing some of the above items.

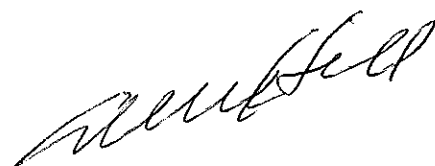
The second primary focus area is maximization of resources. This means that we make the best use of our members' time and talents without burning them out. We also need to make the best use of our facilities, such as use of meeting rooms, use of the Alliance for pancake breakfasts, and perhaps sponsor more dances (with different types of music for the different age groups). We don't need to hit a home run on every project – ball games are won with singles, doubles, a few triples and the occasional home run!

We need to focus on the financial aspects of each project that we decide to participate in – how will we pay for this activity; do we need to do additional fund raising for this project? Post 15 is in a good financial position at this time, but we are also in uncertain financial times. We need to ensure that the Post maintains a good financial condition.

The third area of focus is our programs and events. We need to greater utilize our organization partnerships with other veterans group and the community. We need to be in front of crowds at the appropriate time – there are many groups competing for donations, and the Legion needs to continue to present a positive image to the public. We need to prioritize how we request donations and how we spend that money. Boys State, Legion baseball, shooting sports, support for deployed troops are areas that were discussed.

We also have a need for improving the annual/monthly event planning for better utilization of time and resources. This includes better tracking of events and volunteer hours to help with required activity/hours reports to state and national.

Please contact any of the officers or executive board members if you have additional ideas for improving of Post 15.

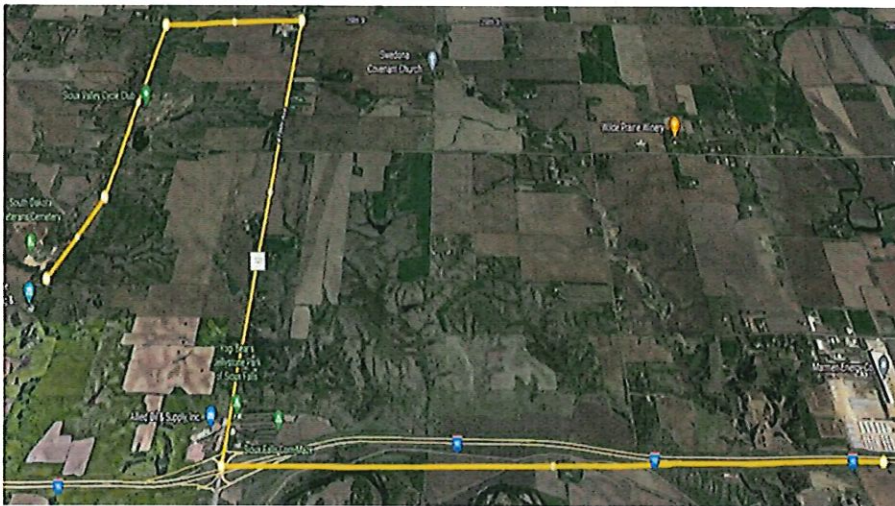


CONSTRUCTION TO START ON ROAD LEADING TO STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

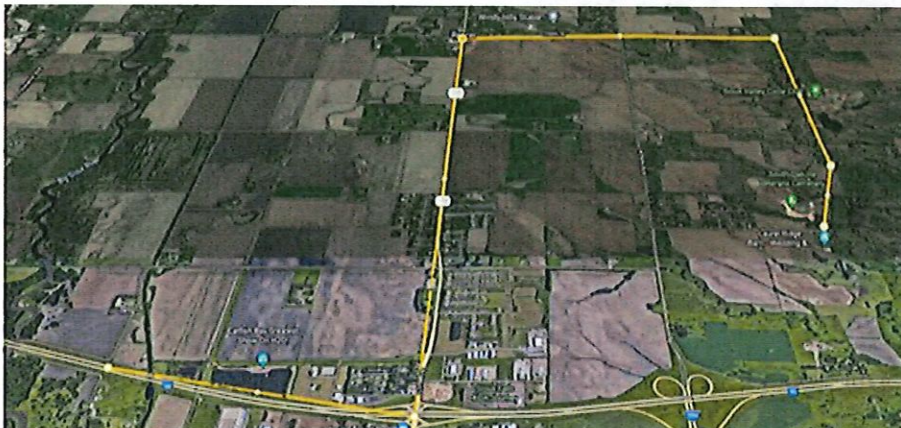
During the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs received funding to pave the road leading to the state veterans cemetery from the south. The road will improve access to the cemetery.

During construction, all traffic going to the cemetery will need to access the cemetery entrance from the north coming off 258th Ave.

Work will be starting next week and the targeted date for completion of the road project is the end of November 2022.

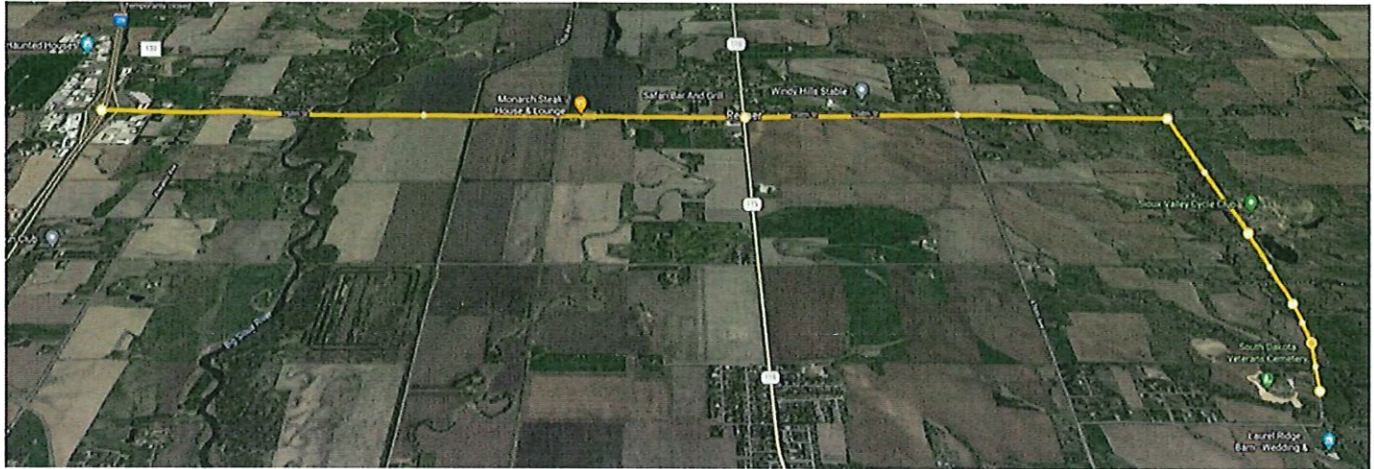


To access the cemetery during construction when traveling I-90 Westbound: Take exit 402. At the intersection turn right (north). Travel northbound reaching 258th St. Turn left (west). Traveling westbound, turn left at 477th Ave. (South). Follow 477th Ave. until you reach the entrance of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery to your right.

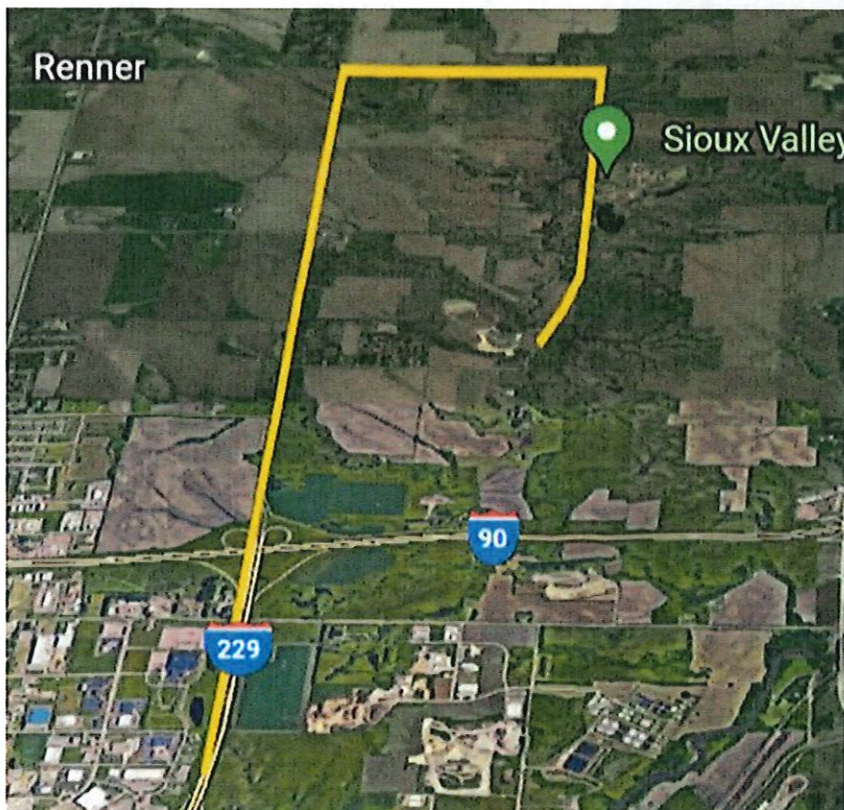


To access the cemetery during construction when traveling I-90 eastbound: Take exit 399. Stay left. Travel northbound on Cliff Ave. to 258th St. At the intersection turn right (east) on 258th St. Traveling eastbound turn right at 477th Ave. (South). Follow 477th Ave. until you reach the entrance of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery to your right.

CEMETERY ROAD (CONTINUED)



To access the cemetery during construction when traveling northbound or southbound on I-29: Take exit 86. Travel eastbound on 258th St. Traveling eastbound turn right at 477th Ave. (South). Follow 477th Ave. until you reach the entrance of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery to your right.



To access the cemetery during construction when traveling I-229 northbound: Continue north on I-229 until it ends and Jim Zweep Highway begins. Follow Jim Zweep Highway to 258th St. Turn right (east). Follow 258th St. until you reach 477th Ave. Turn right at 477th Ave. (South). Follow 477th Ave. until you reach the entrance of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery to your right.



"CHIP IN FOR THE VETS!"

On August 16th the 1st Annual American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 15, Golf Tournament will be held at Elmwood Golf Course in Sioux Falls. This will be 18 Holes, 4 Person Scramble and will be Flighted with 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in three flights. Registration will be from 8 – 9 with a 9 a.m. Shotgun Start. Pin prizes will be on front and back nine for men and women. The cost is \$440 per team. Golf, Cart, Coffee, Rolls, Lunch and Team Souvenir Photo is included. Driving Range will also be included prior to the Shotgun Start.

Proceeds from the tournament will go to assist with the furnishings of the Veterans Community Project (Tiny Homes). Groundbreaking for this project will be held on June 30th at 11:30 a.m. and construction on the first phase will begin right away. The American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 15, is very honored to be a part of this project!

For more information about the golf tournament contact Kasey Jacobson, 605-270-9289, Karen Dunham, 605-366-3291 or Deb Metzger, 605-366-7379. We invite all golfers to bring a team and be a part of this day of fun as we **"Chip In For The Vets!"**

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THE AMERICAN LEGION
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