



Bliss Bugle



Words from the Commander Mark Winter

Fellow Comrades,

We held our Pancake Breakfast and Chislic Feed this month, Mother Nature cooperated with us this month. But we're still looking for the wind speed control to turn it down a few notches (any help would be greatly appreciated).

We have finished our officer nominations. New officers were elected and installed. They will be listed in a later portion of the newsletter. Congratulations to the new electees. All members had the opportunity to attend and be part of the process, the results rest with their decisions.

The plan is to participate in the Loyalty Parade in Brandon on Sunday, May 3, 2026, with the parade starting at 1:00 pm.

The VFW Post Memorial Program is scheduled for Wednesday May 13, 2026; more information will be listed in a later portion of the newsletter.

The Memorial Day Program will be held Monday, May 25, 2026, at the Military Alliance at 10:00 am. The Marine Corps League will be hosting this year.

The Independence Day Parade will be held in downtown Sioux Falls on July 4, 2026, with the parade starting at 10:00 am. We're planning to have a trailer with veterans seated on chairs. If interested, let the office know, seating is limited.

Mark Winter, Commander

VFW Auxiliary President Deb Felton

This month our meeting is May 6th, 7pm in the Armory. We have met our membership numbers, but would love to see that number increase to 110%. If you signed someone up, ask them to come with you to the meeting.

We will be having our monthly "work night" on May 11th. Keep collecting those plastic bags, we will do another "Mat" making night. Let's see how many more mats we can pull together.

"Stand Up for Women Veterans" was held on April 11th from 9-2pm Approx 60 women Veterans attended. Michelle Williams, Jen Kranz, Pat Sultz and Deb Felton were at the VFWA table. Amy Buldoc was MC for the day.

April 18th annual VA "Baby Shower". Deacon Reisner, Jen Kranz, Pat Sultz and Deb Felton were the VFWA volunteers.

April 26th District 1 meeting. 1pm Lunch, 2pm meeting. 104 E 2nd Street, Alcester, SD.

District 1 Officer positions open, President, Secretary, Trustee. Consider volunteering for one of these positions.

May 3rd is the Loyalty Day Parade in Brandon. 628 is doing a float, we need assistance. If you could possibly lend a hand in this please contact Jen @605-630-0429.

Mothers Day on May 10th.

Thank you,
Deb Felton

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Pancake

Breakfast

8:30-12 noon

May 17, 2026

\$8 Adults—\$2 Children 10 and under

This event supports our local veterans
High School JROTC Programs

(Lincoln, Washington, Roosevelt)

John M Bliss Post 628 and Auxiliary
thank you for your support

**BRANDON'S
60TH ANNUAL
LOYALTY DAY PARADE**
SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026
PARADE STARTS AT 1:00PM
A DIAMOND SALUTE TO AMERICA!

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PROUDLY SPONSORED BY
THE BRANDON VFW THREE RIVERS POST #4726
AND VFW AUXILIARY POST #4726



<u>Future Pancake Breakfast</u>	August 16, 2026
May 17, 2026	September 20, 2026
June 21, 2026	October 18, 2026
July 19, 2026	November 15, 2026
	December 20, 2026

Upcoming Events

May

- May 6-Post/Aux Meeting
- May 10-Mothers Day
- May 13- Post Memorial Program 7PM
- May 16-Armed Forces Day
- May 17- Cooties Bake Sale
- May 25-Memorial Day

June

- May 27-Executive Meeting 7PM
- June 3-Post/Auxiliary Meeting
- June 10-Cooties and Auxiliary Meeting
- June 11-14-The Wall that Heals, Replica Vietnam Wall, Brookings
- June 14-Flag Day
- June 21-Auxiliary Bake Sale
- June 21-Fathers Day

July

- June 22 - Past Presidents Meeting 9:30 am
- June 24-Executive Meeting, 7PM
- July 1- Post/Auxiliary Meeting 7pm
- July 3- Post Closed
- July 4- Independence Day
- July 8- Cooties/Cooties Aux Meeting
- July 18-19- Sioux Falls Air Show
- July 19- Cooties Bake Sale



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Announcements

- Chamber of Commerce Memorial Day Service at the Alliance, May 25th at 9am.
- Memorial Day Service at the State Cemetery on the 25th of May at noon.
- VFW Post 628 Day of Service—the post will assist Mount Pleasant Cemetery with a day of clean-up, May 16. Volunteers to meet at Mt Pleasant at 9am.
- We will place flags on the graves of those so deserving, on April 23 starting at 9am. The Girl Scouts will be joining us in this honorable mission. Please join us.
- Armed forced Day Event at the Alliance, 16 May starting at 10am.

Post Memorial Service

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, John M. Bliss Post 628, and VFW Auxiliary will have a Memorial Service for our departed members that have passed away over the past year.

Our Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. with service starting at 7pm. Join us in the Spirit of America room, located at 1700 W. Russell Street, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

We would like to invite you, your family and friends to attend this service and receive a floral token in honor of your deceased Member.

We welcome all to stay for refreshments immediately following the Memorial Service.

Good Of The Order

In Honor

Post

Jerry Flanagan 4/14/2026

Auxiliary

Darleen Jean Symes 4-1-2026

Esther K Vanderloo 4-2-2026



TRICARE Guidance for Displaced Families

The Defense Health Agency is reminding service members and families displaced from overseas duty stations that they remain covered by TRICARE and should review updated guidance to maintain uninterrupted care. Displacement to the United States is treated as a Qualifying Life Event, providing a 90-day window to update enrollment or change regions, while those remaining overseas continue coverage through International SOS. A displaced beneficiary is defined as an active duty service member or family member forced to relocate from an overseas duty station or home abroad due to circumstances like natural disasters, political unrest, or mandatory evacuations. Those who permanently move should follow standard Qualifying Life Event rules. Beneficiaries should check their information in [DEERS](#) and review all care options.

Urgent Care

Call the [MHS Nurse Advice Line](#) 800-TRICARE (874-2273), option 1.

Mental Health

Dial 988 then press 1 or text 838255.

Inputs for the June newsletter are due to the office by May 20.

Email to Office@vfw628.org. Articles, and announcements are welcome.



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Peanut Butter Drive

by VFW Post 628 Auxiliary



Collecting peanut butter for the VOC and local food banks.



Any Brand
Any Size Jar



Now Through July 1st!



UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

Donations can be dropped off at 1700 W Russell St, at the VFW Post 628 office, or at the Monthly Pancake Breakfast at 1600 W Russell St.



Cooties Bake Sale

8:30 AM– Noon
May 17, 2026

Fresh home made bake goods
Supporting our hero's and their families
during their time of need.
The Auxiliary thank you for your support

Statue Donation

Post 628 Quartermaster, Jim McQuisten presents a check to Sioux Falls Veterans Council President, Mark Winter for the Michael Fitzmaurice bronze statue.

The first pouring of bronze is scheduled for April 16. There will be a second pouring at a later date. Though this is a long processes, the end result will be a beautiful statue of Michael Fitzmaurice. Fitzmaurice is a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. The highest award for men and women that have served in our Armed Forces during combat, displaying acts of heroism.

The statue is scheduled to be on display on the Sculpture Walk in Downtown Sioux Falls. It will be relocated after its full year on the walk. The next location has yet to be determined.





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Honoring Our Veterans



May 17, 2026 3PM-6PM

\$10 for Chislic

\$12 Chislic/Fries

Support our VFW Post 628 by coming by and enjoying Chislic with us.

Medicare Give Back Benefit Plan

As an aircraft maintenance officer, I have always believed in preventive maintenance over corrective maintenance. That applies to health care, also. It bothers me when insurance companies refuse to pay for tests that might help prevent health issues but are willing to disburse big bucks once disease or injury occurs.

So, I was thrilled to be introduced two years ago to a program that operates with a preventive maintenance philosophy. Tamara Solum (<https://soluminsurance.com/>) described the Veterans Medicare Give Back Benefit plan, which is offered to Medicare-eligible military veterans at no cost. Humana, the supporting insurance company, offered a monthly \$100 rebate for Medicare Part B, an online pharmacy with \$60 in credits per quarter, and numerous other benefits. Tamara explained that many veterans do not take care of themselves, perhaps due to lack of money or transportation. Having these free items delivered to their homes increases the likelihood of self-care. The plan included two weeks of free meal delivery immediately fol-

Seam Squirrel

Our next meeting will be held Thursday, May 14 2026, in our normal location. We will also hold our Chislic night at its regular date and time. Please see our add.

Nathan Beinegan

Deb Felton

Seam Squirrel

Cooties Aux. President

Future Cooties Chislic

May 17, 2026

June 21, 2026

July 19, 2026

August 16, 2026

September 20, 2026

October 18, 2026

November 15, 2026

December 20, 2026

Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary

“Keep ‘em Smiling in Beds of White”

lowing hospitalization, because those who live alone might not eat properly when they get home. Free gym memberships and other benefits were included to encourage veterans to exercise and socialize.

United Healthcare has taken over the benefit plan from Humana. The quarterly allowance increased to \$65, with additional credits added for daily exercise, health care check-ups, and social events—all with the goal of encouraging a healthy lifestyle. There is also an app that allows you to spend these credits at a local store instead of through mail order.

My reason for publicizing this program, in addition to helping my fellow veterans, is to show insurance companies that people want this service. Prevention is less costly than healing and offers a better quality of life. Tamara (605-496-8946) can tell you about the other benefits of the plan and cover the insurance aspects. For me, it is enough to have my SSA payment increase by \$1,200 per year and have \$260-\$400 in healthcare aids delivered free to my door.

-Diane Diekman



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VFW & AUX STATE CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

June 11 - 14, 2026



Convention Location:

Highland Conference Center
2000 Highland Way
Mitchell, SD 57301
Hotel Options:

Comfort Inn & Suites @ \$189/Night
605-990-2400
Hampton Inn @ \$189/Night
605-995-1575

Email:

Telephone Number:

Full Name:

Title: Post:

Location: VFW / AUX:

Gluten Free Option:

Register after May 11, 2026 - \$150

Convention Registration - \$125
*Includes: Gold Star Luncheon



Non-Member Banquet ONLY - \$40
Non-Member Name:

*Disclaimer: Banquet Only is not applied to VFW/AUX members.



Grand Total: _\$.....



Make checks payable to: Dept of SD VFW
1600 W Russell St, Ste 135 Sioux Falls, SD 57104

[Click Here to Register](#)

Owen Outfitters Helping Veterans

Do you know a veteran that may need some medical equipment while recovering after surgery or a long-term illness. We have your place for the best, gently used medical equipment, Owen's Outfitters.

Owens Outfitters is easily accessible and useable. Owens stocks gently used and new medical supplies. All their inventory has been donated. You can stop in to their location or view their inventory online.

Complete their paperwork, browse for items, borrow the items free of charge and return them when they are no longer needed.

You can help us by donating your time, spreading the word of our services, donating your gently used medical equipment or by a simple donation so that we may continue to serve our community, free of charge.

Get in touch with us by calling 605-215-0884 or by email at owensoutfitters@thelegacyfoundationsd.com



Memorial Day
REMEMBER AND HONOR

Join us as we place flags on the last resting place of America's bravest.
Date: Saturday May 23, 2026
Time: 9am
Location: Mt. Pleasant Cemetery
Girls and Family welcome
Donuts & Juice to follow
Deadline: May 22nd, 2026
Contact: Emma Callahan at jeanabbott1936@gmail.com with any questions

At the Alliance

Best Entertainment for Everyone

The Alliance continues to bring outstanding entertainment to its venue, offering memorable experiences for the community. Recently, Don McKenna delivered a heartfelt John Prine tribute, and just last Saturday, Just Duet! Dueling Pianos energized the crowd during a fundraiser for The Alliance, following an excellent dinner. The evening was generously hosted by L.G. Everist and Henry Carlson Construction.



As Founding Allies of The Alliance, it is important that we show our support for these events. Each has drawn impressive crowds and created enjoyable evenings filled with fun, connection, and community spirit for all who attended.



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Live Pro Wrestling
New Sound Wrestling Presents:

PLANET ZERO

SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH, 2026
SOUTH DAKOTA MILITARY HERITAGE ALLIANCE
1600 W. RUSSELL ST. | SIOUX FALLS, SD
DOORS: 6 P.M. | SHOW: 7 P.M.
TICKET INFO AT: WWW.NEWSOUNDWRESTLING.COM
OR SCAN THE QR CODE

MICK FOLEY

40 YEARS of FOLEY

FRIDAY, MAY 1ST - SIOUX FALLS, SD @ THE ALLIANCE
WWW.COLLECTIVEEFFORTSIOUX.COM

Gun Range Classes

THE
ALLIANCE
SOUTH DAKOTA MILITARY HERITAGE ALLIANCE, INC.

Firearms classes at the range in the Alliance.
Call 605-271-7808 for more information.

ILLUMINATE REAL ESTATE
AND KELLY TEAM FAIRWAY
PRESENT

CASINO NIGHT

an exclusive night benefiting our local heroes

BET ON OUR HEROES

MAY 29

- 6:00 DOORS OPEN + APPETIZERS
- 7:00 - 9:00 CASINO GAMES
- 9:00 DRAWINGS + PRIZES

@ THE ALLIANCE
1600 W. RUSSELL ST.

PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS

John M. Bliss VFW Post 628



REMINDER!! If you are moving, please call our office at 338-0869 and let us know your new address! Thanks!!

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
SIOUX FALLS, SD
PERMIT NO 345

1700 W Russell Street
Sioux Falls SD 57104

605-338-0869
vfw628.org

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Quartermaster: QM@vfw628.org

Office Hours 9am to 3pm

Office email: office@vfw628.org

Facebook: VFW JM Bliss Post 628

Instagram: [jmbliss1921](https://www.instagram.com/jmbliss1921)

Post 628, Auxiliary and Cooties 2026-2027 Leadership

POST

Commander: Ryan Killion

Sr Vice: Don Kranz

Jr Vice: Tadd Goehring

Quartermaster: Jim McQuisten

Adjutant: Malcolm Haugen

Chaplin: Patrick Morgan

Judge Advocate: Harry Engberg

Surgeon: Tadd Goehring

Service Officer: Richard Schwanke

Trustee 3 Year: Nate Beiningen

Trustee 2 Year: Joe Worley

Trustee 1 Year: Harry Engberg

Auxiliary

President: Deb Felton

Sr Vice: Jennifer Kranz

Jr Vice: Patty Sultz

Treasurer: Kim Vennard

Chaplin: Diana Wells

Conductor: Michelle Williams

Guard: Nancy Renner

Trustee 3Year: Kaye Stephenson

Cooties

Seam Squirrel– Nathan Beiningen

Cooties Auxiliary

President– Deb Felton

Some election information is not available at the time of this newsletter. Those missing results will be published in the June newsletter.

Thanks for your patience.