



Three of the greatest Nashville songwriters brought Post 628 and friends a great treat. August 15, Jimmy Yeary, Leslie Sature and Tim Nichols brought their A-game. Songs like, "I Drive Your Truck" (which won both CMA and ACM Song of the Year honors), as well as massive hits like "Why Wait" (Rascal Flatts), "I Called Mama" (Tim McGraw), "She's Somebody's Daughter" (Drew Baldridge),

Blue Bird Cafe Experience



Jimmy Yeary



Leslie Sature



Tim Nichols

Tim Nichols played his big hits as well. Songs like "Live Like You Were Dying" by Tim McGraw, "Heads Carolina, Tails California" by Jo Dee Messina and "She Only Smokes When She Drinks" by Joe Nichols. Leslie Satcher, the only female in this trio, brought more great music. Her hits include "Troubadour" - George Strait, "Politically Uncorrect" - Gretchen Wilson and Merle Haggard, "What Say" - George Strait. Amazing music performed by the songwriters. If you missed it, you missed the best.

Keni Thomas Speaks at the Alliance



Keni Thomas is a former U.S. Army Ranger, motivational speaker, country musician, author, and veteran advocate. As a Staff Sergeant with the 3rd Ranger Battalion, he served in the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia—the event portrayed in *Black Hawk Down*. Keni delivered an inspirational speech focusing on lessons learned while serving in the Rangers. Keni emphasized servant-leadership principle is: "My mission, my people, before myself." Keni finished his speech by singing his hit song, "Not Me".

Ryan Killion
Post Commander

The school year is upon us which means that we will be making plans to get into the schools for our Americanism program, Patriots Pen, and Voice of Democracy programs. The VFW will be working to get into grades 4-6 to give a presentation of flag etiquette, patriotism etc. Please watch the newsletter and your email for notices of these programs. We always need help with this program. Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy are due on the website by COB October 31st this year. As has been the theme we are still looking for great veterans as yourself to help with these two programs. Any amount of time you can give whether to contact a school counselor or help with judging is appreciated. If you could help in any way, please contact me.

I will continue collaborating with younger members trying to solve the big issue of getting them involved with post activities. Once we get something finalized, we will push it out in an email.

The post picnic held on August 22nd, although the numbers were light, all that attended ate too much and had an enjoyable time. I hope that at the next post function you as a member can also make it.

Deb Felton
Auxiliary President

The next meeting is Sept 2nd, 7pm in the Armory.

VFW signed up to assist the VA on 9/2 & 9/9, picnics. Meet by the elevator at 11:20 and go up to the CLC to bring the veterans down to the picnic area, join a veteran for lunch at 1pm. \$7 charge for our meal if we choose to eat with a veteran.

Peanut Butter Project – 38 jars of PB and ten jars of jam/jelly collected and donated to the VOC.

196 Meals made by Aux members and taken to VOC in July and Aug

SOS— Approx \$540 worth of School Supplies donated to The Banquet for distribution.

Work night scheduled for Mon, Sept 14th, 6 p.m. at the Armory, we will be doing bags/mats and Stand Down kits.

“Out of the Darkness” Suicide Walk, downtown Sioux Falls at the LEVITT, on Sat, Sept 19. Registration starts at 11:30am, walk starts at 1pm.

Lefse making October 17 and November 14. 8am-1pm in the Museum. (next to the Armory).

Auxiliary Member Appreciation Luncheon and new member Initiation. October 11, 2026, at NOON

District 1 Meeting. Beresford VFW, Sunday November 1, 2026, Kim Vennard is District 1 Auxiliary President

In Honor



	<u>Post</u>	
Ed Muncie	Army	78
George Harter	Army	93
Ronald Schildhauer		76
	<u>Auxiliary</u>	
	None this Month	



Fresh Lamb Chislic

September 20, 2026

Serving from 3 pm thru 6 pm

\$10 for chislic, ad fries \$12

Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary

"Keep'em Smiling in Beds of White"



Cooties Bake Sale

8:30 am- Noon

September 20, 2026

Fresh homemade
bake goods

Supporting our hero's and their families
during their
time of need

The Cooties Auxiliary thanks you for your
support



Congratulations to Wanda Mix, VFW George Dokken Post 2118 & Auxiliary and Kay Stevenson, VFW Auxiliary John M Bliss Post 628 for being recognized by the VA Hospital for their volunteer hours. Kay has volunteered over 500 hours and Wanda has volunteered over 1,750 hours at the VA hospital.

Pictured with Kay and Wanda is Crystal Reimers, VFW Auxiliary Three Rivers Post 4726. Crystal works in CDCE at the VA

Post Picnic



Commander
Ryan Killion
Cooking the Meats

Post picnic was held August 22. We had a good time and couldn't ask for better weather. Many desserts and salads were furnished by members and auxiliary. The commander furnished and cooked the meat. Some great burgers and brats.

More than 35 members and friends attended. A canopy was set up for some shade and comfort. A donation bar was set up and our Honor Guard Commander, Diane Deikman, was our hostess and bartender.



Who Are the Cooties and Cootie Auxiliary?

The Military Order of the Cootie (MOC) and its Auxiliary (MOCA) dedicated to the motto, "Keep Patients Smiling in Beds of White." The Auxiliary authorized in 1960 and began developing at the local Pup Tent, state Grand, and national Supreme levels. In 1961, MOCA introduced its membership pin and shield logo, marking the start of its growth and service.

MOCA collaborates with the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program to support veterans and patients. Its Clown Program, founded in 1970, brings joy and laughter to VA medical centers, nursing homes, and other care settings.

The Scholarship Program began in 1972 to help students pursuing medical careers. Qualified recipients may renew their scholarships for up to four years, and the program has awarded thousands of dollars to deserving students.

MOCA also supports many health-related causes, including emphysema, arthritis, heart disease, cancer, spinal cord injuries, diabetes, hepatitis C, leukemia, Alzheimer's care, and physical therapy. The Auxiliary also assists the VFW National Home for Families through donations for items such as music lessons, driver training, playgrounds, greenhouse projects, food, and dental care.

The hospital program remains MOCA's primary mission. Members volunteer in VA medical centers and visit veterans in nursing homes, offering companionship, comfort items, hospital parties, lap robes, afghanis, and friendly visits. Through these efforts, MOCA shows veterans that their service remembered, valued, and deeply appreciated.

2026-2027 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Applications Now Open

WASHINGTON (Aug. 17, 2026) — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and Student Veterans of America (SVA) are now accepting applications from student veterans interested in participating in the upcoming 2026-2027 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship program. Since 2014, the fellowship has brought select student veterans, who must be VFW members or membership eligible, to Washington, D.C., to meet face to face with their senators, representatives and staff members.

VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship opportunities are open to all enrolled student veterans who are VFW members or eligible for membership. VFW eligibility criteria can be [found here](#). The program is open to all majors, and some students may be eligible for college credit.

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EDT on Sept. 15, 2026. For full details about the VFW-SVA fellowship and to apply, visit VFW.org/StudentFellowship or contact Gabby Kubinyi, VFW, at gkubinyi@vfw.org or Faisal Sulman, SVA, at faisal.sulman@studentveterans.org.

Fall Council and Registration



VFW & AUX FALL COUNCIL REGISTRATION FORM

September 24-27 2026

Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center
605-343-8550
2111 North Lacrosse Street
Rapid City, SD 57707

Room Rate - \$109.99/night + tax
*Limited rooms available



**RESERVE
YOUR ROOM**
Scan to book your
stay at the Ramkota!

****YOU MUST RESERVE YOUR OWN ROOM****

Email: _____

Full Name: _____

Title: _____ Post#: _____

City: _____ State: _____

VFW/AUX: _____ Gluten Free: _____

Guest Name: _____

ONE REGISTRATION FORM PER PERSON



Register Now for Fall Council 2026 - \$50



Guest Banquet Tickets - \$40



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

Questions? Contact Brent Jones: brent@vfwdeptsd.com





DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA

★ VFW ★

FALL Conference

**24-27
SEPTEMBER
2026**

**RAPID CITY,
SOUTH DAKOTA**

Join us at the

RAMKOTA
HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER

2111 N LACROSSE ST
RAPID CITY, SD 57701
WWW.RAMKOTA.COM

The South Dakota VFW proudly represents over 7,000 members across the state.

This year (July 1 – June 30) our members have:

- ★ Donated over **\$444,000**
- ★ Provided over **36,000** hours of community service

OUR MEMBERS ARE:

- ✓ Ensuring every Veteran has a proper internment
- ✓ Spreading cheer at VA & nursing homes
- ✓ Retiring millions of American flags with dignity
- ✓ Conducting food & clothing drives
- ✓ Providing \$1000s in scholarships
- ✓ Advocating in Pierre & Washington, DC for our Veterans & military families



**RESERVE
YOUR ROOM**
Scan to book your
stay at the Ramkota!



**REGISTER
FOR THE
CONFERENCE**
Scan to register
today!



COMRADESHIP
WITH VFW FAMILY



TRAINING
& LEADERSHIP



SERVICE
TO VETERANS



SOUTH DAKOTA
STRONG

★ NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS. ★

Upcoming Post Events**September**

September 2 - Post/Auxiliary Meeting
September 2-7 - South Dakota State Fair - Huron
September 7 - Labor Day - Post closed
September 9 - VA CLC Picnic - Volunteers Needed
September 18 - Veterans Stand Down
September 19 - Women of the Armed Forces
September 20 - Pancake Breakfast 8:30 am
September 20 - Cooties Chislic 3-6 pm
September 20 - Cooties Bake Sale
September 22 - Honor Flight to DC
September 26 - Fall Council
September 28 - Past Presidents Meeting 8:30 am
September 30 - Post Executive Meeting 7 pm

October

October 7 Post and Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm
October 12 - Columbus Day
October 14 - Cooties and Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm
October 18 - Pancake Breakfast 8:30 am
October 18 - Auxiliary Bake Sale 8:30 am
October 18 - Cooties Chislic 3 pm
October 26 - Past Presidents Meeting 9 am
October 28 - Executive Meeting 7 pm

November

November 1 - Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 1 - District Meeting - Beresford 1 pm
November 3 - Election Day
November 4 - Post/Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm
November 7 - Marine Corps Ball
November 10 - Chamber Mixer - Location TBA
November 11 - SDDVA Bridge Dedication
November 11 - Veterans Day Program The Alliance
November 11 - POST CLOSED
November 12 - A Night With Heros at The Alliance

November 15 - Pancake Breakfast 8:30 am
November 15—Cooties Bake Sale 8:30 am
November 15 - Cooties Chislic 3 pm
November 23 - Past Presidents Meeting 9:30 am
November 25 - Executive Meeting 7 pm
November 26 - Thanksgiving Day /POST CLOSED

December

December 2- Post and Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm
December 8— Chamber Mixer 4pm Location TBA
December 9— Cooties and Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm
December 12 - Day County Coyote Hunt
December 19 - VA CLC Christmas with the Cooties
December 20— Pancake Breakfast 8:30 am
December 20 - Auxiliary Bake Sale 8:30 am
December 20 - Cooties Chislic 3-6 pm
December 24 & 25 Christmas Holiday POST CLOSED
December 28— Past Presidents Meeting 9:30 am
December 30- Post Executive Meeting 7 pm

December 31 - New Years Eve

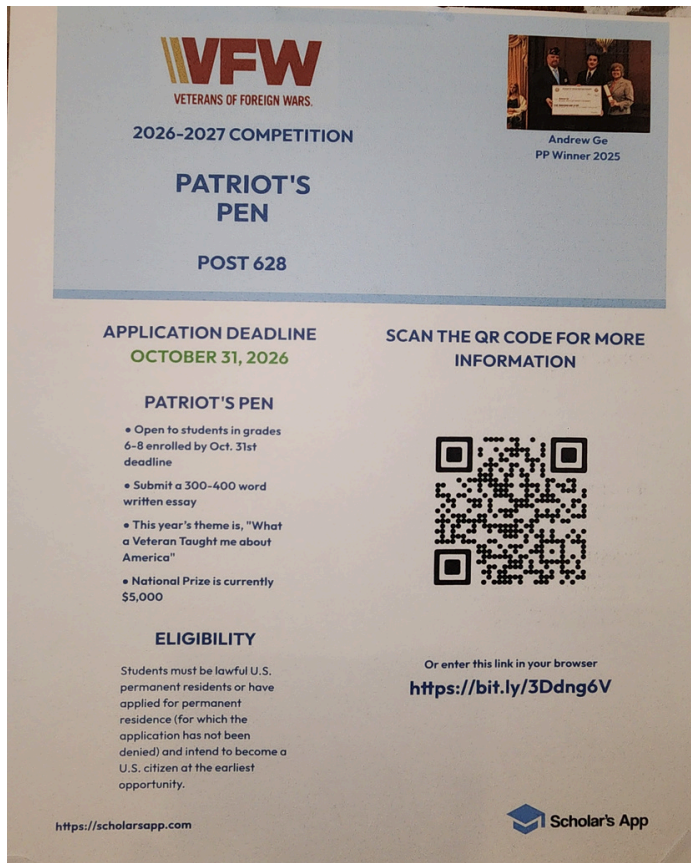
**Post Closed. Time to Say Good-bye to 2026
and say Hello to 2027**

New Years Day, Post 628 office will be closed.
We will hold Tom & Jerrys TBA

January

January 1- Happy New Years, Post Closed
January 3- District Meeting - Sioux Falls - 1pm
January 6- Post and Auxiliary Meeting - 7 pm
January 13- Cooties and Auxiliary Meeting - 7 pm
January 15- C7 Board Meeting - Noon
January 17- Pancake Breakfast - 8:30 am through Noon
January 17- Cooties Bake Sale - 8:30 through Noon
January 17- Cooties Chislic - 3 pm through 6 pm
January 18- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 23- Chili Cookoff and Oyster Stew
January 25- Past Presidents Meeting - 9:30 am
January 27- Post Executive Meeting - 7 pm

Good Of The Order



VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

2026-2027 COMPETITION

PATRIOT'S PEN

POST 628

APPLICATION DEADLINE
OCTOBER 31, 2026

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

PATRIOT'S PEN

- Open to students in grades 6-8 enrolled by Oct. 31st deadline
- Submit a 300-400 word written essay
- This year's theme is, "What a Veteran Taught me about America"
- National Prize is currently \$5,000

ELIGIBILITY

Students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (for which the application has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity.

<https://scholarsapp.com>

Or enter this link in your browser
<https://bit.ly/3Ddng6V>

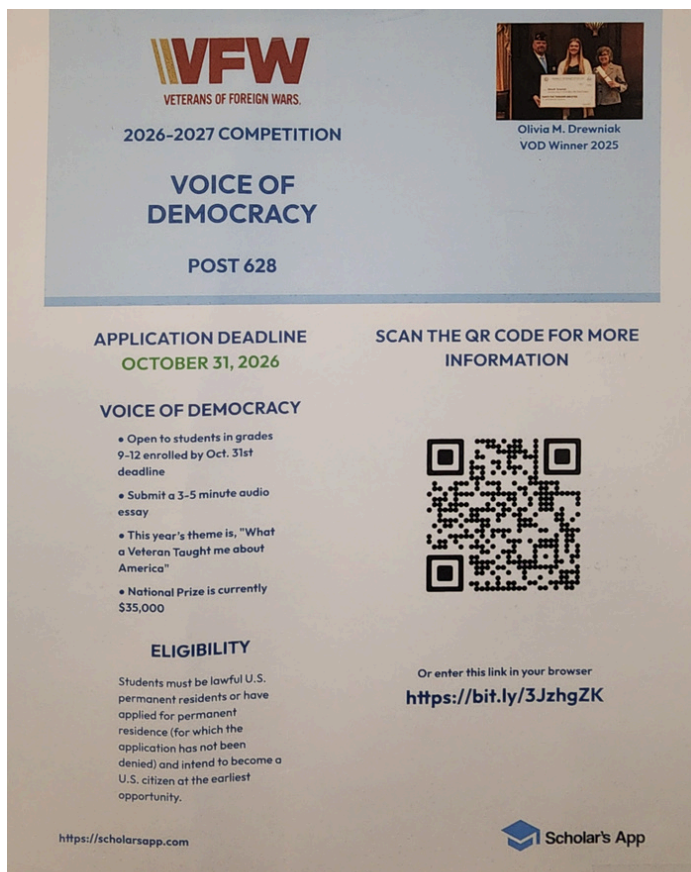
Scholar's App

Patriots Pen

Each year more than 132,000 students in grades 6-8 enter the VFW's Patriot's Pen youth essay contest. The national first-place winner wins \$5,000 and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$55,000, with each first-place state winner receiving a minimum of \$500 at the national level.

The essay contest encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief.

Post 628 is your first contact for getting your child signed up. To view the application and take the first step by clicking the QR Code provided.



VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

2026-2027 COMPETITION

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

POST 628

APPLICATION DEADLINE
OCTOBER 31, 2026

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

- Open to students in grades 9-12 enrolled by Oct. 31st deadline
- Submit a 3-5 minute audio essay
- This year's theme is, "What a Veteran Taught me about America"
- National Prize is currently \$35,000

ELIGIBILITY

Students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (for which the application has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity.

<https://scholarsapp.com>

Or enter this link in your browser
<https://bit.ly/3JzhgZK>

Scholar's App

Voice of Democracy

Established in 1947, our Voice of Democracy® audio-essay program provides high school students with the unique opportunity to express themselves in regard to a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Each year, nearly 28,000 ninth through 12th grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$1.6 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program.

The national first place winner receives a \$35,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's American university, college or vocational/technical school. The complete list of other national scholarships range up to \$21,000, with the first place winner from each VFW Department (state) winning a scholarship of at least \$1,000.

Post 628 is your first contact for getting your child signed up. To view the application and take the first step by clicking the QR Code provided.



John M. Bliss 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

1600 W RUSSELL ST
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57104

Office: 605-338-0869

Office email: Office@vfw628.org

Commander: cmd@vfw628.org

Quartermaster: qm@vfw628.org

Post Web Site: VFW628.org

Facebook: [SiouxFallsVFW](https://www.facebook.com/SiouxFallsVFW)

Instagram: [JMBLISS1921](https://www.instagram.com/JMBLISS1921)

State VFW Office: 605-332-7441

State Web Site: vfwsd.org

Inputs for the September newsletter are due
to the office by August 20.
Email to Office@vfw628.org. Articles, and
announcements are welcome.

POST OFFICERS 2026-2027

Commander	-----	Ryan Killion
Senior Vice Commander	-----	Don Kranz
Junior Vice Commander	-----	Tadd Goehring
Quartermaster	-----	Jim McQuisten
Judge Advocate	-----	Harry Engberg
Surgeon	-----	Tadd Goehring
Chaplin	-----	Patrick Morgan
Adjutant	-----	Butch Haugen
Service Officer	-----	Richard Schwanke

AUXILIARY OFFICERS 2026-2027

President	-----	Deb Felton
Sr. Vice President	-----	Jennifer Kranz
Jr. Vice President	-----	Patty Sultz
Secretary	-----	Beth Honerman
Treasurer	-----	Kim Vennard
Chaplin	-----	Diana Wells
Conductor	-----	Michelle Williams
Guard	-----	Nancy Renner

