

HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: “To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations...”

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations,

which we hope may never again be severed, and

Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as “Armistice Day.” Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation’s history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word “Armistice” and inserting in its place the word “Veterans.” With the approval of this legislation (Public Law

380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first “Veterans Day Proclamation” which stated: “In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans’ organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible.”

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA’s General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee’s chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to

ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



Becker Body Shop

Complete Body Repair

Charles Becker - Owner



Thank You Veterans!

1702 Broadway • Yankton
Phone/Fax (605) 665-5925

Direct Repair Facility for All Major Insurance Companies

Remembering Our Nations Heroes!

FREEBURG HAY

Where every day is a hay day!

Honoring Gary Freeburg

Gayville, SD • 605-267-4426



Yankton Pizza Ranch



Veterans & Active Military
50% Off Buffet
All Day 11/9-11/13

1501 Broadway Ave.
Yankton
665-1222

M-F 11-2 & 5-8
Sat-Sun 11-8

Thank You Veterans

BONANZA Steakhouse

N. Hwy 81
Yankton
665-6394

Hours:
Sun - Thurs • 11am - 9pm
Fri & Sat • 11am - 10pm

State FarmTM
Insurance • Mutual Funds • State Farm Bank



Rhonda Wesseln

www.rhondainsuresyou.com
1023 W. 9th St., Yankton
665-4411

VARILEK TRUCK REPAIR, Inc.

(605) 665-1447

East Hwy. 50
Yankton, SD

Proudly Serving the area over 33 years!



We Support Our Vets!

Midwest

Insurance Agency, Inc.

Home • Farm • Auto • Aflac

JEANNE & TRAVIS DEVINE

909 Broadway, Tripp Park Plaza,
Yankton, SD • 605-665-2389

Hedahls Auto Plus

THANKS TO OUR LOCAL VETERANS!
Honoring: Lee Lohff

SEE US FOR ALL YOUR AUTOMOTIVE NEEDS!

Watts No. 308 Capital • Yankton, SD Business No.
(800) 359-2216 (605) 665-3712
WHOLESALE & RETAIL PARTS & AUTOMOTIVE ACCESSORIES

PSAHL-KOSTEL

FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY INC.

Guiding and serving families
with compassion & trust

MEMBER
Order of the
Golden Rule

605-665-9679 • 1-800-495-9679
PO Box 34 • Yankton, SD 57078
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com



first chiropractic
CENTER

2507 Fox Run Parkway
Yankton

665-8073

“Let us help you on your journey to better health.”

Drivers & Owner Operators Wanted



Premium Best Transport

1501 Wek Road • Yankton, SD 57078

(800) 359-4084
FAX (605) 665-0162

HVAC & Electrical Contractors



Power Source Electric
Residential & Commercial
Electrical Contractors
260.8683

Your Heating & Cooling
Specialists
665.2895

Divisions of Elecair, Inc.

Chris Frick

Thank you, Veterans!
Doug Dykstra



THANK YOU VETERANS!

Where the Buck Stops
and the Hunter Shops!

DAKOTA ARCHERY & OUTDOOR SPORTS

2305 East Hwy. 50, Yankton, SD • 605-665-8340
Open til 9 p.m. Every Night