

Helen Parr

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1321 E. 4th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57103
605-332-9432

SERVICE RECORD:

U.S. Army (Spec. 4/E-4)
DATE ENTERED: 28 August 1967
DATE DISCHARGED: 17 January 1969

SERVICE AREAS:

Trained as medic at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas.
Stationed at William Beaumont General Army Hospital (Receptionist in Emergency Room) in El Paso, Texas.

DECORATIONS AND OTHER AWARDS WHILE IN THE MILITARY:

National Defense Service Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS:

American Legion – 1977
Disabled American Veterans – 1987
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary – 1994
40et8 - 2014

POSITIONS ELECTED OR APPOINTED (NATIONAL, STATE, OR LOCAL):

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Department of South Dakota: Department of South Dakota Commander 2013-2015 (First female veteran in South Dakota elected as State DAV commander) – Present; Employment Committee 1985 – 2004; Awards Committee 1999-2000; Convention Committee 1995-1998; DAV Arthur H. Muchow Chapter No 1: Commander 1996-1997; Sr. Vice 1995-1996; Jr. Vice 1994-1995; Chapter Executive Committee 1990-1994 and 1997 – Present; Chapter Committees of Awards, Constitution and Bylaws, Entertainment, Hospital, Membership, New Programs, Older Veterans Assistance Program, Public Relations, and Sioux Falls Veterans Council. Sioux Falls Veterans Council: Adjutant 1997-2000 and Assistant Adjutant 1995-1997. Sioux Falls Division of Veterans Affairs: Information Service Officer at American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars at District Conferences, Fall Conferences, and State Conventions. American Legion: State Employment Committee 1993-1999.

TIME SPENT HELPING VETERANS:

DAV Volunteer on State and Chapter Levels: Volunteer weekly with the following programs – Awards, Convention Committee, Constitution & Bylaws, Employment, Entertainment, Hospital, Membership, New Programs, Older Veterans Assistance, Public Relations, and Executive Committee. Volunteer years from 1985 to 2003.

Sioux Falls Veterans Council representation of DAV Chapter and elected as Assistant Adjutant and Adjutant.

As a Service Officer for the South Dakota Division of Veterans Affairs has provided assistance to veterans and their families after work hours at Veterans Conferences and State Conventions from March 1, 1993 to present.

Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion (1989-2003)

Homeless Veterans Stand Down (1999-2003)

Veterans Job Find: Organizing Veterans Job Find in Sioux Falls.

Annual Women Veterans Conference and Luncheon: Organizing and participating in event held in Sioux Falls.

VFW Annual Auxiliary Membership Dinner: Was guest speaker at the dinner on September 24, 2003.
Helen has volunteered many times as speaker at veterans and auxiliary functions since 1993.

AWARDS FOR HELPING VETERANS:

Mudo Jurovich Memorial Veterans Service Award: Presented by the U.S. Department of Labor's Denver Regional Office in 1989.

Helen Van Laecken, a U.S. Army veteran from the Vietnam era, was cited for her efforts to find suitable training and employment opportunities for veterans in southeast South Dakota. The award also recognized Van Laecken for her outstanding performance record with Job Service and her commitment to veterans' organizations.

In addition to organizing a Veterans Job Find in Sioux Falls in 1988, Van Laecken maintains weekly outreach activities with the local Vet Center, VA Hospital, VA Regional Office, and other Job Service offices in eastern South Dakota. She also volunteers her time to provide crisis intervention to veterans' applicants.

The Mudo Jurovich Award, named for a former Wyoming Employment Security Commission administrator, is awarded each fiscal year to an individual in the U.S. Department of Labor's Region VIII. The region includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Named Sioux Falls Veteran of the Year.

DAV CHAPTER COMMANDER AWARD: Presented by DAV Arthur H. Muchow Chapter No. 1 in 1997. Awarded to Helen Van Laecken for her leadership and vision as DAV Chapter Commander.

Spirit of Dakota Award: Nominated for award in 1989. The Spirit of Dakota Award Society awards an outstanding South Dakota woman who demonstrates the leadership qualities and personifies the Spirit of Dakota. Her vision, courage, strength of character, and community commitment has positioned her as a role model, not only for her family and peers, but for the area in which she lives. She promotes social, civic, cultural arts and/or educational advancement of others.

OTHER COMMENTS:

Helen (Van Laecken) Parr has volunteered many hours to provide many programs and services to our veterans and their families in the Sioux Falls area and the state of South Dakota. As a Disabled Veteran Outreach Person (DVOP) with Sioux Falls Job Service and a Service Officer (SO) with the South Dakota Division of Veterans Affairs, Mrs. (Van Laecken) Parr has gone out of her way to make sure veterans are treated as "First Class Citizens." She has volunteered many hours after work to assist all veterans. Helen works closely with all veterans' organizations.

Helen has four brothers and one sister of which a total of five children served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Her father, Leon Sloan, served in the U.S. Army during World War II and received a purple heart.

SPOUSE: David Parr

Two children and seven grandchildren

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

OTHER COMMENTS:

Helen works closely with all veterans' associations in belief that we are all working toward the good of the veterans and dependents.

EDUCATION:

Dakota Wesleyan College, Mitchell, SD

With BS in English, Minor in Biology and Secondary Education with a Teaching Certificate

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE:

March 2007 - July 2012 Veterans Service Representative and Privacy Officer-SD VA Regional Office.

March 1993 - March 2007 Veterans Service Officer-SD Division of Veterans Affairs, Sioux Falls (1st female Service Officer in the State).

January 1992 - February 1993 Co-Owner Woodworking Business.

June 1991 - December 1991 VA Vocational Rehab Specialist-SD VA Regional Office.

December 1984 - May 1991 Disabled American Veterans Outreach Person (DVOP) Sioux Falls Job Service South Dakota Department of Labor (1st female DVOP for SD).