



# NEWSLETTER

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY**



## **SDDVA TO HOST THREE WHAT'S BREWING EVENTS IN APRIL**

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting three “Coffee and Conversation” programs in April. The Department welcomes the opportunity to visit one-on-one with veterans and see what’s brewing!

On Thursday, April 4, our team will be at the Chamberlain Community Center (112 N. Main Street) at 1:00 pm (CT).

On Friday, April 12, SDDVA staff will be in Webster at the VFW Post 4690 (521 1<sup>st</sup> Street West). The social and free pulled pork dinner starts at 5:00 pm and the “What’s Brewing” conversation starts at 5:30 pm.

On Tuesday, April 16, staff will be at the Eureka School Multi-Purpose Room (805 10<sup>th</sup> Street – Main Entrance) at 1:00 pm (CT).

“What’s Brewing’ is a great opportunity for us to visit with veterans and hear about the challenges they might be experiencing first-hand. These programs also allow us the opportunity to speak with them about new benefits and services,” said SDDVA Secretary Greg Whitlock. “As the advocates for South Dakota veterans, we need to hear about the things our veterans are facing. We walk among veterans every day, and yet we may not even realize the magnitude of their sacrifices to serve our country.”

The SDDVA team and county veterans service officers will address questions about veteran’s benefits including compensation, education, pension, healthcare, burial, state veterans cemetery, and state veterans home.

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# MILITARY HONORS CEREMONY FOR UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS

The Black Hills National Cemetery will host its quarterly Military Honors Ceremony for Unaccompanied Veterans on Monday, April 1, 2024, at 9:00 am (MT).

This ceremony provides military funeral honors to those veterans interred at the cemetery over the previous quarter, who did not have honors at the time of burial. The South Dakota Army National Guard from Camp Rapid and Sturgis Volunteer Honor Guard Post 33 will be performing honors.

The ceremony will be held at the Black Hills National Cemetery Committal Shelter near the main flagpole (20902 Pleasant Valley Drive) in Sturgis.

# VIETNAM COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

The Black Hills National Cemetery will host a Vietnam Commemoration Ceremony on Friday, March 29, 2024 at 10:00am (MT).

This commemoration recognizes all men and women who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces during the U.S. involvement in Vietnam—November 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975. The Vietnam War commemoration is a long-overdue opportunity for all Americans to recognize, honor, and thank our Vietnam Veterans and their families for their service and sacrifices during one of America's longest wars.

The ceremony will be held at the Black Hills National Cemetery Committal Shelter (20901 Pleasant Valley Drive) in Sturgis (near the main flag pole).



## NEW TO SDDVA TEAM

Please join the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs in welcoming Maura Deboer and Melissa Moren to the Department.

Both Maura and Melissa will serve on our team at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

Deboer has been a licensed practical nurse (LPN) for over 30 years. She was raised in Ohio and moved to South Dakota in 2015. She enjoys working in long term care and believes the guests at our home are our great-est hidden treasure.

She has three children and two grandchildren. Since her move to South Dakota, Deboer has learned to fish and enjoys the great buffalo in South Dakota.



Maura Deboer



Melissa Moren

Moren is also an LPN, and recently graduated from Western Dakota Tech College with her LPN degree.

She enjoys the opportunity to provide care to veterans. She is a mother of four, so is kept very busy! When not at work, Melissa loves spending time with her family and playing darts!





**Veterans,  
See  
What's  
Brewing!**



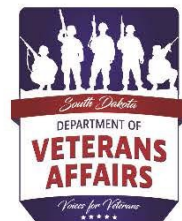
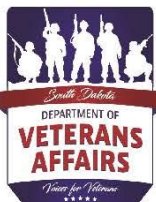
**We invite all veterans to join us for a  
“Veterans Coffee and Networking.”**

**Free coffee and treats while you chat with new and old  
friends alike and learn more about veterans benefits from  
the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.**

**Thursday—April 4, 2024**

**1:00 pm (CT)**

**Chamberlain Community Center  
(112 N. Main Street—Chamberlain)**



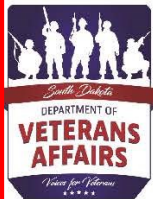




**Veterans,  
See  
What's  
Brewing!**



**We invite all veterans and spouses to join us for a  
“Veterans Dinner, Coffee, and Networking.”  
Free dinner while you chat with new and old friends alike and  
learn more about veterans benefits from the  
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.**



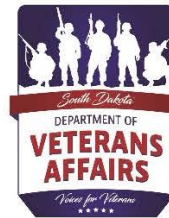
**Friday—April 12, 2024**

**5:00 pm Dinner /5:30 pm Conversation**

**VFW Post 4690**

**(521 1st Street West—Webster)**

**Please RSVP by April 5th by calling 605-345-9512 or  
email ([daycvso@itctel.com](mailto:daycvso@itctel.com))**







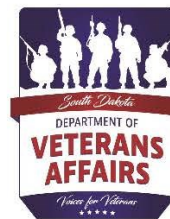
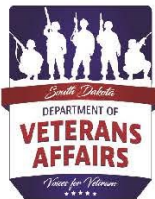
**Veterans,  
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**We invite all veterans to join us for a  
“Veterans Coffee and Networking.”  
Free coffee and treats while you chat with new and old friends  
alike and learn more about veterans benefits from the South  
Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.**

**Tuesday—April 16, 2024  
1:00 pm (CT)**

**Eureka School Multi Purpose Room  
(805 10th Street—Eureka)**





# MELISSA STOCKWELL

*Veteran. Paralympian. Author. Mom.*

**FRIDAY**  
**VETAID**  
**April 5, 2024**

**DOORS OPEN AT 5PM**  
**EVENT STARTS AT 6PM**

HELD AT: THE ALLIANCE,  
1600 W. RUSSELL ST., SIOUX FALLS, SD 57104

## *The Power of Choice*

The Inspiring Story of Melissa Stockwell, an Army Veteran and Paralympic Athlete  
Melissa Stockwell served as a Second Lieutenant in the US Army, and was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq in March 2004. Sadly, just three weeks into her deployment, a roadside bomb hit her Humvee causing the loss of her left leg above the knee. After undergoing several surgeries to recover from multiple infections, Melissa was honorably discharged from the Army. As the first female soldier to lose a limb in active combat, she was awarded both The Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart.

Despite the tragic incident, Melissa turned to sports for recovery. She made history in April 2008 by becoming the first Iraqi War Veteran to qualify for the Beijing Paralympics. She then shifted her focus to Paratriathlon and went on to become a three-time World Champion. Her talent and hard work led her to win the Paralympic Bronze Medal at the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro on September 11, 2016.

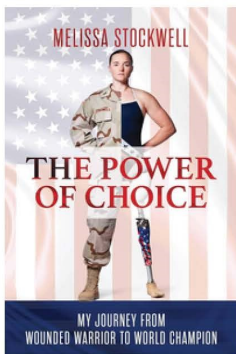


## TICKETS:

GENERAL SEATING: \$20  
GENERAL SEATING with Pre-signed Book: \$45



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR  
TICKETS OR GO TO  
[www.vfw628.org](http://www.vfw628.org)



Pre-Signed Books  
Available for Purchase at the event  
for \$30 (Limited Quantity)



*the* **ALLIANCE**  
South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance, Inc.



*Proceeds benefit local Veterans Support Programs*



**April 24, 2024**  
**4:00pm - 7:00pm**  
**Vermillion Eagles Club**  
**114 West Main St.**

- **FREE Meal for Military-Connected People**
- **Meet with Vital Resources and Service Providers**
- **Service Members, Veterans, and their Families have the chance to receive up to \$250 in Grocery Gift Cards**



**Contact: Joseph Knoer, Student Veteran Resource Coordinator, USD; [Joseph.Knoer01@usd.edu](mailto:Joseph.Knoer01@usd.edu); 605-658-3570**

**Eliminating food insecurity among veteran and military families living in rural South Dakota**





**SUPPORT OUR ARMY RESERVE FAMILIES**

**April 27, 2024**  
**11:00am-1:00pm**  
**Vern Eide Marine**  
**4501 E Arrowhead Pkwy, Sioux Falls**

- **FREE Meal for U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers and their Spouses**
- **Meet with Vital Resources and Service Providers**
- **Launch of the Ready to Serve Food Pantry for Reservists and their families**

**Contact: SSG Zachary Cosens; [Zach.Cosens1992@gmail.com](mailto:Zach.Cosens1992@gmail.com);  
(417) 459-7500 or Jill Baker at [Jill@sdvets.org](mailto:Jill@sdvets.org)**

**Eliminating food insecurity among veteran and military families living in rural South Dakota**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar 29—April 1—State Offices Closed

Apr 4—Brule County What's Brewing—Community Center—(112 N. Main St)—Chamberlain—1:00 pm (CT)

Apr 5—Melissa Stockwell Program—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Apr 8—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—Drive to Fly @ Great Shots—(2505 W. Benson Road)—Sioux Falls—  
1:30 pm—5:00 pm (CT)

Apr 12—Day County What's Brewing—VFW Post—(521 First St West)—Webster—5:00 pm (CT)

## **Apr 12—Purple Up for Military Kids**

Apr 16—McPherson County What's Brewing—School Multi Purpose Room—(805 10th St)—Eureka—1:00 pm (CT)

Apr 17—SD Veterans Council Meeting—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—9:00 am (MT)

Apr 19—Mogen's Heroes Dance—El Riad Shrine—(510 S. Phillips)—Sioux Falls—6:00 pm (CT)

Apr 23—SDDVA Mini Conference—Pennington County Conference Room—(312 Kansas City St)—Rapid City—10:00  
am—2:00 pm (MT)

Apr 24—SDDVA Mini Conference—Post 8 AL Cabin—(520 S. Pierre St)—Pierre—10:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)

Apr 24—Operation Chow Line—Vermillion Eagles Club—(114 W. Main St)—Vermillion—4:00—7:00 pm (CT)

Apr 25—SDDVA Mini Conference—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls—10:00 am—2:00  
pm (CT)

Apr 26-27—DAV State Convention—Deadwood Lodge

Apr 27—Operation Chow Line—Vern Eide Marine—(4501 E. Arrowhead Pkwy)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)

May 6-18—Fareway Round Up Campaign at participating stores

May 7—Corson County What's Brewing—Pavilion—(Main and First Ave)—McIntosh—10:00 am (MT)

May 7—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 18—Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center—(1201 N.  
West Ave)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

May 9—Gregory County What's Brewing—American Legion Post 6—(223 Main Street)—Gregory—5:00 pm (CT)

May 21—Yankton County What's Brewing—VFW Post 791—(209 Cedar St)—Yankton—10:00 am (CT)

May 21—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 19—Welcome Home Ceremony—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—  
Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

May 27—SDDVA Memorial Day Program—SD Veterans Cemetery—12:00 noon (CT)

Jun 5—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 20—Welcome Home Ceremony—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—  
Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (CT)

Jun 7—8—VFW State Conference—Holiday Inn—Spearfish

Jun 14—Midwest Honor Flight Day of Sweetness—Chick-fil-A—(4005 W. 41st St)—Sioux Falls—7:00 am —  
10:00 pm (CT)

Jun 20—23—American Legion State Conference—Pierre

Jun 30—Midwest Honor Flight Honor Ride—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls—  
Registration—1:00 pm/Ride Begins at 2:30 pm (CT)

Jul 15—6th Annual Tee it up for the Troops Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—Arrowhead Country Club—(3675  
Sheridan Lake Road)—Rapid City—7:15 am (MT)

Jul 17—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Aberdeen



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 1—2—South Dakota Suicide Prevention Conference—Convention Center—(1201 N. West Ave)—Sioux Falls

Aug 21—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Yankton

Aug 26—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—The Barrel House—(4701 E. 54th St)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—8:00 pm (CT)

Aug 29—Veterans Day at the SD State Fair—Northwest Energy Freedom Stage—Huron

Aug 29—Sep 2—SD State Fair—Huron

Sep 3—5—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Sep 18—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Rapid City

Oct 12—Midwest Honor Flight Third Annual Elvis Night—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St)—Sioux Falls

Oct 16—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Brookings

Nov 9—Fifth Annual Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair We've Got Your Six—Sturgis

Nov 18—Wreaths Across America Fundraiser—The Barrel House—(4701 E. 54th St)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—8:00 pm (CT)

Nov 20—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Sioux Falls

Nov 20—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Sioux Falls

Nov 21—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Watertown

Nov 22—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Rapid City

Nov 23—SD Veterans Council Legislative Round Table—Pierre

Dec 3—Governor's Budget Address—1:00 pm

Dec 14—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)

## 2025 Events

Jan 14—Governor's State of the State Address—1:00 pm

Jan 14—Legislative Session starts

Jan 15—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Pierre

Feb 14—16—American Legion Mid-Winter Conference—Oacoma

Jun 12—15—VFW State Convention—Ramkota—Pierre

Jun 19—22—American Legion State Conference—Huron

Dec 13—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer

South Dakota Department of the Military <https://military.sd.gov/>

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov>

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