



South Dakota Department of the Military  
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



## T.F. RIGGS HIGH SCHOOL SELECTED REGIONAL VETERANS DAY SITE

The Veterans Day National Committee has designated T. F. Riggs High School in Pierre as a Regional Site for the celebration of Veterans Day 2016.

The Committee believes this community event serves as a model for other communities to follow in planning their own Veterans Day observances.

This is the third time that T. F. Riggs has been awarded this honor.

Community Veterans Day celebrations honoring America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good are held at T. F. Riggs High School, Georgia Morse Middle School, and Washington, Jefferson, McKinley, Buchanan and St. Joseph elementary schools.

The large assembly, held at T.F. Riggs High School Theater, is a dynamic program that involves veterans, veterans service organizations, youth, faculty, elected officials and community leaders. The mission of the T. F. Riggs High School/ Community program is to honor, support and thank all who have served and are currently serving in our military. All high school students attend the program and learn first-hand that freedom is not free.

After this community program, veterans are treated to a lunch at the local American Legion Post home and then are invited to visit the elementary classrooms. Each elementary school in Pierre hosts veterans and families and offer a variety of program content – including patriotic artwork, the creation of a wall of honor that features pictures of family members who are serving or have served in the military, folding the flag ceremonies, reaffirming their pledge of allegiance, and the singing of various patriotic songs.



### *Inside this issue:*

114th Fighter Wing	2
Veterans Day at the State Fair	2
Rousselle Joins SDDVA Team	3
New VSO at Gregory County	3
Davison County and Vet Centers Announce Pilot Project	3
Upcoming Events	4

## 114TH FIGHTER WING RECEIVES AIR FORCE OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD

For the second year in a row, the National Guard Bureau has announced the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing as a recipient of a 2015 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

This is the eighth time the unit has received this award for exceptional meritorious service. The 114th is one of 40 Air National Guard units from across the nation selected for the award.

In a letter announcing the recipients, Air National Guard Director Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice commended the winners for having been selected from an outstanding group of nominees.

"The dedication and commitment of the members of these organizations enable the Air National Guard to fulfill its commitment to the missions of peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, domestic improvement and most important of all - defense of America," said Rice, in the announcement. "My congratulations to the best of the best."

"For 70 years, the Airmen of the 114th Fighter Wing have represented their communities, state and nation through their unwavering dedication to service in support of global missions and, when called upon, state activations," said Col. Nathan Alholinna, 114th commander. "The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is truly a testament to service and sacrifice of today's airmen and their families."

## VETERANS DAY AT THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FAIR

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Thursday, Sept. 1, 2016, as Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair, calling on all South Dakotans to honor those men and women who fought bravely for our freedoms.

At 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 1, the South Dakota State Fair will host a "Salute to Veterans" program. The program will be held on the Northwest Energy Freedom Stage (Recreation Avenue). Brad Richardson, superintendent of the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, will be one of the speakers and will share the story of the construction of our new State Veterans Home.

"Whether in peace or at war, the important role of our veterans cannot be denied. They are men and women from all walks of life that have one thing in common — a love for this great country," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "No matter where or when veterans have served, they've always served with distinction and their service to this country is a bridge that was built on courage, dedication and patriotism."

Representatives from the Veterans Service Organizations, the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home, as well as county veterans service officers and our Department staff will have an informational booth in the Veterans Building on Flag Avenue. Veterans are encouraged to stop by the booth and learn more about benefits and programs available to them as well.

To show appreciation for their service, the Fair will give all veterans and active military personnel free gate admission on Sept. 1.

South Dakota's Fallen Heroes Banner exhibit will be displayed in the Midway Corners throughout the duration of the Fair.

## ROUSSELLE JOINS SDDVA TEAM

Tyler Rousselle has joined the SDDVA team and will be serving as the State Veterans Service Officer at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home in Hot Springs.

Tyler began his duties at the Home on Monday of this week.

Tyler served in the Marine Corps from 2006 – 2011. He did a tour in Afghanistan at Camp Leatherneck and is currently serving in the South Dakota Army National Guard and will be commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant from ROTC in December.

Tyler will also graduate from Black Hills State University in December. He and his veteran wife live in the Custer area.

Tyler will be joining us at the SDDVA Annual Benefit School so you will have the opportunity to meet him. Tyler's email address is: [tyler.rousselle@state.sd.us](mailto:tyler.rousselle@state.sd.us) and his phone number is 605-745-5127 ext 1500123.

Tyler will be replacing Mat Steffens who will be retiring in September.



## GREGORY COUNTY NAMES NEW CVSO

With the recent retirement of Roy Farabee, the Gregory County Commissioners have selected Marvin Gies as their new County Veterans Service Officer. This is Marvin's second ride at the rodeo! Marvin was the Gregory County VSO from 1993-2004.

Marvin also served in the United States Army from 1955-1958.

Marvin will be in the office on Fridays from 8:00 am–5:00 pm. His email address is [gregorycovso@gmail.com](mailto:gregorycovso@gmail.com). Marvin Will be at the school in August, so you will all have the opportunity to welcome him back to the network.

## DAVISON COUNTY AND SIOUX FALLS VET CENTERS TESTING TRIAL PROJECT

Jessica Davidson, Davison County VSO, has recently announced that the Sioux Falls Vet Center is launching a pilot test program with Davison County. Starting September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Morris Patzlaff MSW, CSW-PIP, LMFT from the Sioux Falls Vet Center will be in Mitchell to help provide counseling services to area veterans. They are tentatively looking at having staff available at the Mitchell location on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

Their goal is to be able to reach more veterans and they believe the Mitchell office is a central location which will afford veterans easier travels.

Jessica will be contacting neighboring C/TVSO's about this trial project in hopes to assist their veterans as well.



# Upcoming Events

- Aug. 22-25—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota  
 Sep. 1—Veterans Day at the State Fair—Huron - Program at 10:30 at the Freedom Stage  
 Sep. 2—Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Game— Sioux Falls Stadium (1001 North West Avenue) - 6:00 pm (CT)  
 Sep. 3—DAV Brookings Chapter 22 and 727 Transportation Unit Poker Run—Brookings National Guard Armory—10:00 am (CT)  
 Sep. 9—Veterans Stand Down—Wagner Armory—9:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)  
 Sep. 14—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)  
 Sept. 15—Veterans/First Responders Appreciation Day—Watertown City Park—5:00 pm—9:00 pm (CT)  
 Sep. 16—National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park—6:30 pm (CT)  
 Sep. 23—Veterans Stand Down—VFW—Sioux Falls (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue) - 9:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)  
 Sept. 23-25—VFW Fall Council of Administration and State Commander and Auxiliary President Homecoming—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre  
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)  
 Oct. 8—DAV Fall Conference—DAV—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
- 2017**
- Feb. 4—Valentines for Veterans Concert—Sioux Falls Washington Pavilion—3:00 pm (CT)  
 Feb 10-12—SD American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma  
 Jun 15-18—SD American Legion State Conference—Watertown



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer  
 South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>  
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>  
 Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue  
 Pierre, SD 57501  
 Phone: 605-773-8242  
 E-mail address: [audry.ricketts@state.sd.us](mailto:audry.ricketts@state.sd.us)

