



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



CAPITOL COMPLEX COMMISSION GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO NEW PROJECTS

The Capitol Complex Restoration and Beautification Commission unanimously gave approval to the site and design of the Code Talker Memorial.

The Code Talkers were Native American soldiers who used their language during World Wars I and II to transmit messages the enemy couldn't decipher. Over 200 code talkers were from South Dakota.

The estimated size of the memorial would be 20 feet in length and eight to ten feet high and the bronze statues in front would be "life-size." They are hoping to have the memorial in place and unveiled by the fall of 2017.

The monument will include the names of the South Dakota's Code Talkers.

Under the proposal, the monument would be placed between the Capitol Lake Visitors Center and the Fighting Stallions Memorial facing Capitol Lake.

The State will install LED lighting in the Flaming Fountain, which is part of the monuments along the Capitol Lake.

For decades, the Eternal Flaming Fountain on the northwest corner of Capitol Lake illuminated the Capitol grounds. But in 2008, the fountain stopped flaming as the supply of natural gas fueling the fire mysteriously disappeared.

In recent months, veteran organizations and Pierre residents have been pushing local lawmakers to try and get the fountain to flame again.

At the Capitol Complex Restoration and Beautification Commission meeting last week, it was announced that the state will proceed with the LED lighting.

The goal is to have the new lights unveiled at the 10th anniversary ceremony of the Vietnam War Memorial Dedication in September.



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VA AWARDS GRANT TO SISSETON-WAHPETON OYATE FOR VETERANS CEMETERY

Robert Walters, Interim Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs has announced that the VA has awarded a grant of \$3,393,509 for 100 percent of allowable costs associated with the establishment of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Veterans Cemetery in Sisseton, SD.



Robert Walters



The grant will fund the construction of the main entrance, a maintenance facility, road, an assembly area, a committal shelter, 99 preplaced crypts, 51 cremains gravesites, landscaping and supporting infrastructure. The project will develop approximately six acres and serve 11,982 veterans and their families.

The closes national cemetery is VA's Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, MN.

SDDVA CLAIMS OFFICE STAFF RAISES FUNDS TO ASSIST VETERANS

Kudos to the SDDVA's Sioux Falls Claims Office team.

The team raised over \$200 to assist South Dakota Veterans. The funds were used to purchase cleaning supplies and will be given to veterans as they transition from homeless to new apartments/home status.



SDDVA STAFF TOUR SIOUX FALLS VA FACILITIES



This week Pierre and Rapid City SDDVA staff toured VA facilities in Sioux Falls.

SDDVA Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City staff, along with CTVSOS also participated in a briefing that was provided by the Department of Interior.

SDDVA's Kevin Bowen also made a presentation on federal

and state benefits for the DOI staff.



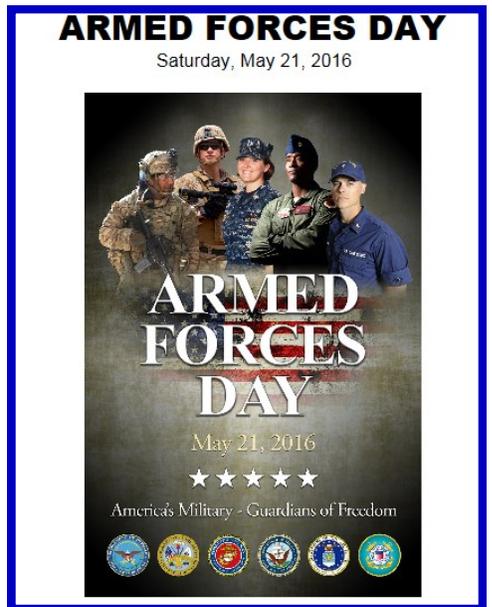
ARMED FORCES DAY

This weekend people will gather to celebrate Armed Forces Day, in honor of our military forces and their contributions to society.

Communities will hold motor cycle rides, parades, military displays, and educational activities.

We encourage you to take time to thank those who SERVED!!!!!! Let us all remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us re-consecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain.

Please honor not only those who fought in our Nation's wars, but all who took that solemn oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies" as members of America's armed forces. From those brave patriots who fought for this Nation's independence straight through to the young men and women serving so valiantly in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and across every continent and ocean today, America's Veterans have earned and deserve our respect and appreciation for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families.



Sunday May 22

VETERANS

HONOR RIDE

CHARITY RUN + DICE ROLL

Benefiting Ride Therapy Project / Motorcycles and Cars welcome

**\$20 for One Round +
\$10 Additional Rounds**

Registration starts at 9 AM
at Black Hills Powersports
3005 Beale St, Rapid City, SD 57703

Ride Starts at 11 AM
Stops at the Gaslight in Rockerville,
Deadwood VFW Post 5969,
Sturgis Vets Club and
Rapid City VFW Post 1273

The Silent Auction will start at 5 PM
at Rapid City VFW Post 1273
420 Main St, Rapid City, SD 57701



GEOCACHE FOR SOLDIERS DAY

Gov. Dugaard has proclaimed May 21, 2016, as Geocache for Soldiers Day in South Dakota and encourages our heroes to reach out and participate in programs that help them return to the lives they led before their deployments.

Erin Dreis, engineer with the SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 200th Engineer Company, has discovered such a program in the North Carolina Outward Bound School. Dreis will be hosting "Geocache for Soldiers" at Richmond Lake in Aberdeen, SD, as a means to support South Dakota Veterans wanting to attend the North Carolina Outward Bound School:

Everyday men and women in uniform return home from active duty only to face the unexpected challenges of readjusting to life at home. That journey home can be difficult and challenging for our heroes. We applaud Dreis for her actions in developing a fundraiser to support our heroes and their families ease the often difficult transition home.



Mark Mayer presents Governor's Proclamation to Erin Dreis.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT DESIGNS ETHAN VETERANS MEMORIAL

A new Veterans Memorial will be built on the south side of HWY 42 near the edge of Ethan. The memorial will serve as a thank you to honor veterans and those currently serving in the military.

Tristen Scott, a sophomore at Ethan High School. Scott designed the memorial.

The full story can be found at: <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com/news/local/4034879-ethan-high-school-student-designs-veterans-memorial>



Standing Rock Sioux Tribe D/N/Lakota Code Talkers Honoring Ceremony

May 25, 2016, 1000HRS (10:00AM)

Standing Rock Tribal Council Chambers, Fort Yates, ND

- Post Colors:** Growler-Looking Back-Jamerson
American Legion Post 239
- Drum Group:** Lakeside Singers
Flag – Veterans Honor Song
- Prayer:** Joe Dunn, US Navy,
SRST Councilman
- Moderator:** Elliott Ward, US Army
- Welcome:** Dave Archambault II, Chairman SRST
- South Dakota Code Talker Memorial:**
Steve Emery, US Army
South Dakota Secretary of
Tribal Relations
- Keynote speaker:** Frank White Bull, US Army,
SRST Councilman
- Presentation
Of Plaques & Tags:** Chairman Archambault, Secretary Emery, Councilman White Bull
- Drum group:** WWI - WWII Honor Songs
- Retire colors:** Post 239
- Lunch:** Sitting Bull College – SRST Department of Veterans Affairs



For more information contact:

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SRST Department of Veterans Affairs: 701/854-8527/64/89

Upcoming Events

- May 23—Town Hall and Ceremony to Honor Vietnam Veterans—Rapid City VFW (420 Main St) 4:00 pm (MT)
 May 28—Project 22 Showings—Mac Theater on Main Street—Mobridge (Showings at 4:00 pm and 7:30 pm)
 Jun. 9-12—VFW State Convention—The Lodge at Deadwood
 Jun. 14—Vietnam War Veterans Recognition—Custer Jr/Sr. High School (1645 Wildcat Lane) - 9:30 am (MT)
 Jun. 14—Vietnam War Veterans Recognition—Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home (2500 Minnekahta Avenue) - Hot Springs - 1:30 pm (MT)
 Jun. 16-19—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota—Watertown
 Jun. 29—Black Hills Veterans Job Fair—Central States Fair Grounds (915 Centre Street) - 11:00 am (MT)
 Jul. 1—Buffalo Chip Annual Flag Raising Ceremony—West Gate Entrance off Ft. Meade Way—6:00 pm (MT)
 Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Jul. 23-24—Sioux Falls Air Show
 Aug. 22-25—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)



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