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SDDVA Secretary Whitlock's June Column – Celebrating our Independence

The Fourth of July is a celebration - a celebration of the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, one of our nation's most cherished documents.

It's about celebrating the values that this country was founded upon.

It's about celebrating the ideals of democracy, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is a time for us to embrace the foundation this great country was built on and share this legacy with our children and our grandchildren.

It is a time for us to remember and honor those first Americans who made sacrifices to create this country, as well as all those that have defended it.

Freedom is not free. Only because of the bravery and service of our armed forces does freedom ring loud and clear in our nation and around the world.

Helen Keller once said, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."

As we gather with friends and family this Fourth of July, let us all CELEBRATE our independence. Let us all celebrate the brave spirit of those who founded the United States of America and the men and women who continue to ensure our freedom.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs