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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SDDVA SECRETARY SCHNEIDER'S DECEMBER COLUMN – HOLIDAY SEASON

This Christmas season, let us unite in gratitude, remembrance, and hope. As Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, it's an honor to reflect with you on what makes this time of year so special for our veteran community, military families, and all South Dakotans.

Holidays remind us to cherish family, honor those who serve, and remember our fallen heroes. For many, December brings both joy and reflection, a season when we hold our loved ones close in spirit.

Prayers and support remain with those currently deployed and with families waiting for their safe return. For many veterans, memories of holidays spent in uniform are complex, but their commitment to country and loved ones continues to shine through each season. Your courage brings comfort, strength, and security to our communities.

SDDVA Events and December Dates

December is a meaningful month for military families and veterans in South Dakota. There are events dedicated to remembrance, camaraderie, and support for those who serve:

- December 2: Governor's Budget Address at the State Capitol
- December 4: Holiday Parade at Ellsworth Air Force Base will host its annual parade, bringing festive cheer to our military community.
- December 9: SDDVA County/Tribal Veterans Service Officer Winter Mini Conference (virtual)
- December 13: Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, Sioux Falls – honoring those we have lost and reinforcing our promise to "Remember, Honor, and Teach."
- December 18: What's Brewing - Pierre, a time to connect and reflect with fellow veterans and supporters
- December 24-26: State Offices Closed for Christmas

As you travel, gather, or pause in quiet reflection, remember that this season can bring both celebration and challenges. Please take care on the roads, look out for one another, and reach out to friends, neighbors, or fellow veterans who may need support or companionship.

Wishing you a safe, peaceful holiday season with your loved ones. Remember you are valued, and you're never alone.

Happy Holidays from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Jeremiah J. Schneider, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs