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SDDVA Secretary Schneider's August Column – Stay Connected

Service is woven into the fabric of South Dakota, carried forward by veterans, families, and communities who continue to support one another every day. In August, we are reminded that honoring service is not limited to the past; it is an ongoing commitment we share across generations.

Across our state, veterans continue to lead through quiet acts of service. They strengthen their communities as neighbors, mentors, and volunteers. Their example reflects a simple truth; service does not end when the uniform comes off. It continues in the way they live, give back, and support others.

August brings several opportunities to recognize service, reflect on sacrifice, and connect as a community:

- August 4: National Coast Guard Day
- August 7: Purple Heart Day
- August 8: USS South Dakota Day of Honor – Sioux Falls
- August 15: PFC Vern Harris FHBD – Isabel
- August 16: National Airborne Day
- August 16: CPL Lawrence Brownotter FHBD – Bullhead
- August 17: 1LT Laurence Radlinger FHBD – Rapid City
- August 21: PFC Randolph Hutchinson FHBD – Wakpala
- August 22: SSG Ronald McIlravy FHBD – New Underwood
- August 29: Marine Corps Reserve Birthday

These observances and events reflect the depth of service across generations and across every branch of our military.

Here in South Dakota, the Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedication Program continues to stand as a lasting tribute to those who were killed in action or remain missing in action. Since 2019, we have dedicated 90 bridges to 96 heroes, ensuring their names and sacrifices remain part of our daily lives.

Each ceremony brings together families, veterans, and community members to remember, reflect, and stand in support of one another. These moments of connection ensure that no sacrifice is forgotten.

Connection remains at the heart of everything we do. Whether through remembrance, community events, or simple acts of support, each effort plays a role in honoring those who have served. This August, let us continue that mission by staying connected, showing gratitude, and ensuring that every veteran knows they are supported and remembered.

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