South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
Soldiers and Sailors Building
425 E. Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-3269
https://vetaffairs.sd.gov

For Immediate Release
Contact: DJ Montreal, Operations & Communications Director, 605.204.9241

Secretary Schneider's November Column

November in South Dakota reminds us of who is in charge, and it is not the weather forecast. A crisp fall morning can become a search for a snow shovel by afternoon. The leaves are down, harvest is wrapping up, and someone is still saying, "It's not that cold yet."

November also gives us time to reflect on gratitude, service, and remembrance. It is National Veterans and Military Families Month, a reminder that military service is never carried out by one person alone. Spouses, children, parents, and caregivers share the long days, missed milestones, and uncertainty that come with service. Their sacrifices deserve our thanks.

Here in South Dakota, service is not measured only by rank, ribbons, or years in uniform. It is measured by character, courage, sacrifice, and the willingness to put something greater than oneself first.

As Thanksgiving approaches, take a moment to thank our veterans and military families. An empty chair, a photograph, or a familiar story can remind us that service and sacrifice remain part of a family long after the uniform is folded away.

November event schedule also includes the following highlights:

- November 10: U.S.M.C. Birthday
- November 11: Veterans Day – State Offices Closed
- November 11: Regional Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedication – Sioux Falls
- November 13: National Family Caregivers Month – Sioux Falls
- November 20: Native American Heritage Event – Sioux Falls
- November 21: Veterans Benefits Fair - Mitchell
- November 26-27: Thanksgiving Break – State Offices Closed

Our responsibility extends beyond holidays. We honor service through daily action, helping veterans access earned benefits, supporting military families, and preserving the stories of those who served.

As the winds cross the prairie, thank a veteran, check on a military family, share a story, and offer a friendly wave to the neighbor chasing the same leaves for the third time.

To our veterans and families: Thank you for your service, sacrifice, and the freedoms you have entrusted to us. May we always prove worthy of them.

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

-30