



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



SDDVA PARTICIPATES IN USD LEGAL CLINIC

Last week, the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, in partnership with The South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance in Sioux Falls, held a free drop-in legal clinic for veterans and their families. The event provided an invaluable opportunity for veterans to receive legal advice and assistance, ensuring they had access to the support they need.

The walk-in legal clinic allowed veterans and their families to meet with legal professionals and law students who offered their services free of charge. The event covered a variety of legal topics, from family law and estate planning to benefits and other veteran-related issues. Veterans had the chance to discuss their concerns, ask questions, and receive guidance in a welcoming, supportive environment.

In addition to the legal services, veterans were able to meet with Minnehaha County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) Doug Roderick and South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) Training and Outreach Coordinator DJ Montreal. Both were on hand to assist veterans with navigating state and federal resources, providing essential information on available benefits and services.

The clinic was a testament to the community's commitment to supporting those who have served. By providing access to free legal counsel and connecting veterans with local resources, the event helped strengthen the bond between veterans and the support system available to them.

For many veterans, events like this are an essential way to ensure they can receive the help they need, not only with legal matters but also with accessing crucial benefits and services. The collaboration between the Knudson School of Law, The Military Heritage Alliance, and SDDVA exemplifies a strong community partnership dedicated to honoring and supporting South Dakota's veterans.

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SDDVA OUTREACH

SDDVA Veterans Service Officer Caitlyn Olsen hosted an SDDVA booth at the recent Stand Up for Women Veterans program. The booth afforded her the chance to engage with attendees and share valuable resources. The event provided women veterans with the opportunity to discuss healthy relationships, connect with various vendors, and learn about a wide range of resources available to them.



It was a fantastic event that offered a supportive space for women veterans to meet others, share experiences, and discover services that can enhance their lives.

At the recent Wagner Farm and Home Show, the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) held a successful outreach event aimed at connecting local veterans with valuable resources and support.

The event was led by SDDVA Field Service Officer Kevin Bowen and Charles Mix County Veteran Service Officer Jerry Seiner.



The outreach proved to be a great opportunity for veterans in the area to meet one-on-one with experts and learn about the benefits and services available to them. Bowen and Seiner made numerous contacts with veterans, providing information on everything from healthcare and compensation to housing and educational opportunities.

These two events underscored the SDDVA's commitment to serving those who have served, ensuring veterans have access to the resources and support they need. Our team was able to build relationships, answer questions, and assist veterans in navigating the often complex systems available to them.

COOKIES DELIVERED TO VETERANS

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the American Legion Post 71 for their generous donation of Girl Scout Cookies to our residents at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

Thanks to their kindness, the Girl Scouts were able to visit and personally deliver the cookies to our residents, spreading joy and creating a fun, festive atmosphere.

The smiles on our residents' faces as they received the treats were priceless, and the energy in the room was contagious! We also want to give a huge thank you to the Girl Scouts who made the special trip to deliver the cookies. Your kindness and dedication to supporting our veterans are truly appreciated.

We are incredibly grateful for all the volunteers who continue to provide gifts and treats for our residents, brightening their days and making them feel valued. Thank you all for your continued support!



SDARNG RECOGNIZED

The South Dakota Army National Guard’s (SDARNG) Sustainability Team placed 1st in the Army National Guard Environmental Award for Sustainability for fiscal year 2024, at an award event held late January 2025 in Arkansas.

This is the second consecutive time the SDARNG has won this bi-annual award given to only one state for their contributions to energy conservation and waste diversion.

“This isn’t just about energy and water conservation and waste diversion, it’s also about the impact and contributions to sustainability in Army infrastructure and training capabilities that these efforts support for the South Dakota National Guard,” said the SDARNG’s Environmental Program Manager, Maj. William Domagall.

The Sustainability Team supports the SDARNG’s more than 3,100 soldiers across locations in 22 communities, including 26 armories, seven maintenance facilities, and several leased training areas and permanent training sites.

“Facility management costs affect the Guard and when we are saving funds on particular energy sources or reducing consumption or disposal costs, those funds can be allocated elsewhere to improve training and readiness,” said Domagall.



(continued)

SDARNG RECOGNITION

(CONTINUED)

The Sustainability Team recognizes the award, and success, is one to be shared with the force behind them- the implementors in the field are ensuring that waste diversion is occurring where applicable, pollution prevention measures are being considered in risk assessments, and the maintenance and management of systems are being maintained for peak operation. This success cannot occur without the work of leaders setting the example and our workforce doing the right thing.

The SDARNG typically sees an annual decrease in energy consumption of about 2%, but last year it was at nearly 7%. This is an estimated cost savings of approximately \$80,775 saved on electricity, natural gas, propane, and steam power bills.

“When it comes to energy conservation and energy savings there are multiple benefits; from the reduction of emissions into the environment to saving dollars that can then be used to train and equip our troops and help meet mission requirements,” said SDARNG’s Water and Energy Manager Mike Haltiner.

The Team achieved a 74.1% diversion rate this year, replicating the success of nearly 75% diversion in 2023—the federal goal for 2030, and exceeding the 2025 goal of 65% overall diversion.

“We also reduced the costs for potable water and sewer bills by an estimated \$16,766 last year,” Haltiner added.

With a 74% diversion rate there is a cost savings from avoided landfill fees. For 2024 the cost savings was more than \$99,000, and in FY23 the SDARNG avoided \$95,000 in landfill fees. This was due in large part because of construction debris being diverted for reuse, but it is also a passive effort by facility users to put recycling into the appropriate bin for recycling pickup.

“Simply putting the correct material in the recycling bin increases our facility maintenance capabilities. Recycling helps us keep our facilities maintained,” said Domagall.

This award showcases the South Dakota National Guard’s commitment to a culture of excellence, the focus on mission readiness, and a mindful approach to the impacts on our communities that we live and serve in.

Next, they will complete at the Army level.



DAV Information Fair

May 17, 2025

Rapid City

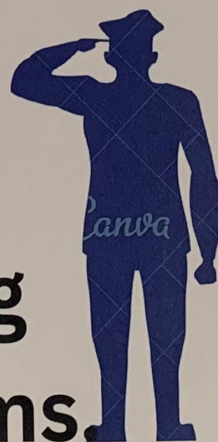
American Legion

818 E. St. Patrick Street

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

40 vendors will be present

CSOs will be
available to
assist with filing
FREE VA claims.



Contact Info:

Christine Speirs - 605-787-2645

6TH ANNUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT SUMMIT

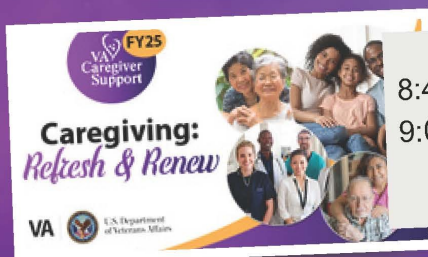
MAY 7, 2025

8:30AM-12:00PM (CT)

3 SOUTH DAKOTA
SOCIAL WORK CEUS

VIRTUAL
EVENT

FREE



VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT
8:40a.m.-
9:00 a.m. A brief overview of the VA Caregiver Support Program.



**CARING FOR SELF IN ORDER TO
CARE FOR OTHERS**
An overview of the personal health inventory (PHI) and ways to practice self compassion.



CHAPLAIN SERVICE
An overview of Chaplain Services and how chaplains assess the spiritual needs of caregivers, especially at the veteran's end of life.



ADAPTIVE SPORTS
An overview of recreational therapy and adaptive sports. Information on how these programs help veterans refresh and renew their over all well-being.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Sioux Falls VA Health Care System



TO REGISTER CALL
605-336-3230 EXT 5080

Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair

Saturday, November 8, 2025 **Sturgis Community Center**

Opening Ceremony at 11:00 am in the Auditorium
Inviting ALL Veterans and their families

**Veterans Service
Officers (VSO)
from Lawrence,
Meade, and State**

**VA Services
VA Flu Clinic**



**Support Groups
Veteran Organizations
Outdoor Recreation**

**Service Dogs
Equine Therapy
Employment**

**Housing
Education**

**Clothing
While Supplies Last!**

11:00 am to 2:00 pm

The event is free and includes lunch & refreshments.

<https://wevegotyoursix.weebly.com>

Bring proof that you are a veteran. VSO's can help you if you don't have one.

If you need assistance, contact Julie Malcolm at

Northernhillsgotyoursix@outlook.com



DINE TO DONATE

⇒ *Support* ⇐

MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

3:30PM-10PM



10%

DONATION NIGHT

for **Midwest Honor Flight**.

Present this flyer at the Sioux-Falls location and Texas Roadhouse will donate **10%** of your total food purchases to **Midwest Honor Flight!**

605-362-5784
4307 W. EMPIRE PLACE
SIOUX FALLS, SD

2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

- Apr 7—BHNC Military Honors Ceremony for Unaccompanied Veterans—BHNC Committal Shelter—(20901 Pleasant Valley Drive)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
- Apr 12—Pizza, Pints, and Puzzles Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—The Social—(301 S. Thompson Avenue)—Sioux Falls—5:30 pm (CT)
- Apr 15—Dine to Donate for Midwest Honor Flight—Texas Roadhouse—(4307 W. Empire Place)—Sioux Falls—3:30 pm—10:00 pm (CT)
- Apr 16—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home—(2500 Minnekahta Avenue)—Hot Springs—9:00 am (MT)
- Apr 18-21—State Offices Closed
- Apr 25-26—State DAV Convention—AmericInn—Aberdeen
- Apr 27-30—VFW Proficiency Training Conference—Annapolis, MD
- May 1—Loyalty Day
- May 6—Mission 24 Midwest Honor Flight Operation Welcome Home—Sioux Falls Arena—(1201 N. West Avenue)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (Doors open at 7:30 pm) (CT)
- May 6—SDDVA Mini Conference—Pennington County Conference Room—(312 Kansas City St)—Rapid City—10:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
- May 7—SDDVA Mini Conference—Post 8 American Legion—(520 S. Pierre St)—Pierre—10:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)
- May 8—Victory in Europe Day
- May 8—SDDVA Mini Conference—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell St—Heritage Room)—Sioux Falls—10:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)
- May 9—Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- May 17—Armed Forces Day
- May 20—Mission 25 Midwest Honor Flight Operation Welcome Home—Sioux Falls Arena—(1201 N. West Avenue)—Sioux Falls—9:30 pm (Doors open at 7:30 pm) (CT)
- May 26—State Offices Closed—Memorial Day
- May 26—SDDVA Memorial Day Program at State Veterans Cemetery—12:00 noon (CT)
- Jun 3—Mission 26 Midwest Honor Flight Operation Welcome Home—Hawthorne Aviation—(5815 Mitchell Street #1207)—Sioux City, IA —9:30 pm (Doors open at 7:30 pm) (CT)
- Jun 7—Rich Schild Memorial Poker Run—The Keg—Tabor—12:00 noon (CT)
- Jun 10—MWHF Day of Sweetness—Chick-Fil-A—(4005 W. 41st Street)—Sioux Falls—6:30 am—10:00 pm (CT)
- Jun 14—8th Annual MWHF Pars and Pubs—Downtown Sioux Falls—11:00 am—4:00 pm (CT)
- Jun 19—State Offices Closed—Juneteenth Day
- Jun 19-22—VFW State Convention—Ramkota—Pierre
- Jun 19-22—American Legion State Conference—Huron
- Jun 29—MWHF Honor Ride—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—1:00 pm (CT)
- Jul 4—State Offices Closed—Fourth of July
- Jul 14—Black Hills Tee it up for the Troops Tournament—Arrowhead Country Club—Rapid City
- Jul 16—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Mitchell VFW Post—(215 N. Main Street)—Mitchell
- Jul 19—Veterans Information Day—BG Ernie Edwards Readiness Center—(1951 N. HWY 20)—Watertown—10:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)
- Jul 26—3rd Annual Korean War Veterans Appreciation Day—Brookings Outdoor Adventure Center—(2810 22nd Avenue S)—Brookings—9:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Aug 4-5—Your Journey Matters 2025 Behavioral Health Conference—Sioux Falls Sheraton Convention Center
Aug 7—Purple Heart Day
Aug 9-13—National VFW Convention—Columbus, OH
Aug 11—Barrel House Day of Giving for Midwest Honor Flight—(4701 E. 54th Street)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—Midnight (CT)
Aug 20—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Virtual
Aug 27-Sep 1—South Dakota State Fair
Aug 28—Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair
Sep 1—State Offices Closed—Labor Day
Sep 9-12—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School
Sep 17—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Yankton VFW Post—(209 S. Cedar Street)—Yankton
Sep 19—POW/MIA Day
Sep 21-25—NVS Accredited Representative Skill Training—Annapolis, MD
Sep 21-26—NVS Basic for New Accredited Representatives—Annapolis, MD
Oct 13—State Offices Closed—Native American Day
Oct 15—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Virtual
Oct 18—4th Annual Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser—South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm
Nov 7—MWHF Bingo—Severance Brewing—(701 N. Phillips Avenue)—Sioux Falls—7:00—9:00 pm (CT)
Nov 8—Northern Hills Veterans Appreciation Fair—Sturgis Community Center—(1401 Lazelle Street)—Sturgis—11:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
Nov 10—Barrel House Day of Giving for the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery WAA—(4701 E. 54th Street)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am—Midnight (CT)
Nov 11—State Offices Closed—Veterans Day
Nov 19—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters (1519 W. 51st Street)—Sioux Falls
Nov 27—State Offices Closed—Thanksgiving
Nov 29—Side by Side MWHF Poker Run—Pilot Mikes Roadhouse—(4901 N. Ellis Road)—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 13—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 25—State Offices Closed—Christmas Day

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South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
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