



South Dakota Department of the Military
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



VETERANS DAY AT THE STATE FAIR

At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Thursday, Sept. 3, 2015, as Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair, calling on all South Dakotans to honor those men and women who fought bravely for our freedoms.

At 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 3, the South Dakota State Fair will host a “Salute to Veterans” program. The program will be held on the Northwest Energy Freedom Stage (Recreation Avenue). SDDVA’s State Veterans Service Officer Erin Bultje will be one of the speakers and will share the Department’s vision to honor the Korean War Veterans in 2016.

“Whether in peace or at war, the important role of our veterans cannot be denied. They are men and women from all walks of life that have one thing in common — a love for this great country,” said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. “No matter where or when veterans have served, they’ve always served with distinction and their service to this country is a bridge that was built on courage, dedication and patriotism.”

Representatives from the veterans service organizations, staff from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as county veterans service officers will have an informational booth in the Veterans Building on Flag Avenue. Veterans are encouraged to stop by the booth and learn more about benefits and programs available to them.

South Dakota’s Fallen Heroes Banner exhibit will be displayed in the Midway Corners throughout the duration of the Fair.



Inside this issue:

Sen. Rounds Visits with SDDVA and CTVSOs	2
SDDVA Annual Benefits School	3-5
BHC Awarded SECDEF Award	6
SDNG Updates Rep. Noem	7
Rides to Benefit Veterans	8-9
Upcoming Events	10

SENATOR ROUNDS REACHES OUT TO CTVSO'S



Angella Sutton



Mike Wiley

Senator Rounds serves on the United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. This committee has jurisdiction over compensation of veterans, life insurance issued by the government due to military service, national cemeteries, pensions, and readjustment of service men and women to civilian life.



Secretary Zimmerman

Senator Mike Rounds, a member of the United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, joined the CTVSOs and the SDDVA staff at their annual steak-fry on Monday evening. Rounds asked this team of leaders to share with him the challenges and roadblocks they are facing with the VA and asked the group for ideas to resolve these issues.

Mike Wiley, Day County VSO, representing District I and Angella Sutton, Meade County VSO, representing District IV, spoke on behalf of the VSO's. Some of the issues discussed were: Choice, inclusion of CBOCs in the 40-mile rule, caregiver support programs, mental health, and open enrollment.

Senator Rounds, during his comments noted that the organization chart for the VA is like a spider web — "Too many layers." "Our nation's veterans and their families sacrifice everything to protect and defend our country and keep us safe," said Rounds. "We have an obligation to care for them when their mission is complete. The staff at the SDDVA and county and tribal veterans' service officers work tirelessly to make certain our veterans receive the benefits they have been promised. Given the challenges within the national VA, our work at the local level, advocating for our veterans, is more important than ever and has a direct and positive impact on the lives of military families."

Staffers Mike Beckert and Jeff Marlette were there to hear the groups' concerns and visit one-on-one with CTVSO's and staff.

"Having Senator Rounds listen to our CTVSOs was invaluable," said Secretary Zimmerman. "His leadership on the United States Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs will be a great asset to all of our veterans."

LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO SOUTH DAKOTA'S VETERANS

County and tribal veterans' service officers (CTVSO) and staff from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA) were recognized for their dedication to serving veterans and their families at an awards program Tuesday, Aug. 25.

The annual event, organized by SDDVA, was held in conjunction with the veterans' benefits training conference for CTVSOs.

"The Department and our VSOs are here to serve all veterans from every conflict and every generation who have defended our nation and the American way of life," said Secretary Zimmerman. "It is important to recognize individuals who provide outstanding service. These leaders enhance the lives of our veterans and their families everyday."

Lt. Governor Matt Michels was the keynote speaker during the Tuesday night banquet and presented awards to the leaders within the network. Michels commended the CTVSO's and the SDDVA staff for their commitment to South Dakota's veterans and thanked them for carrying the torch that lights the way for our heroes.

Those recognized for their outstanding leadership were:

Manaja Hill, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe VSO

Jessica Davidson, Davison County VSO

Sheila Carpenter, Veterans Services Claims Assistant for Hughes, Stanley and Sully Counties

Krystal Magee, SDDVA Claims Examiner

Manaja Hill was awarded the 2015 Veterans Service Officer of the Year Award for his "what needs to be done" spirit. He is mission driven and moves in a direction that will improve the lives of our veterans. Manaja was recognized for his outstanding commitment to veterans, work with homeless veterans, compensated work therapy program, communication with veterans and outreach coordination.



Lt. Gov. Michels, TVSO Hill and Dep. Sec. Pollard



CVSO Davidson and F.O. Bowen

Jessica Davidson of Davison County in Mitchell received the Outreach of the Year Award, which distinguishes Jessica as the 2015 leader in conducting outreach activities. Jessica was recognized for her outstanding commitment to veterans, introduction of social media to her veterans, coordination of outreach events and involving the community in supporting our veterans.

Sheila Carpenter, veteran's services claims assistant for the Hughes, Stanley and Sully County VSO office in Pierre, was awarded the 2015 Partner of the Year Award. Carpenter was recognized for her compassion, commitment, knowledge and professionalism when assisting South Dakota's veterans.



Lt. Gov. Michels and Carpenter

(story continued on next page)

LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SERVICE TO SOUTH DAKOTA'S VETERANS (CONTINUED)

Krystal Magee, SDDVA claims examiner, was awarded the SDDVA 2015 Employee of the Year Award. Magee was recognized for her commitment to their partners and her dedication to packaging claims. "Krystal is known for training and mentoring her peers to ensure success in filing of claims," said SDDVA Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard. "Krystal has a unique drive to take on more responsibility and constantly demonstrating her strengths as a young leader within our Department and our network."

General George Patton once said, "Never tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." And that folks, is what Krystal Magee has done for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. She's a leader that guides, assists, mentors and accomplishes.



Lt. Gov. Michels and Krystal Magee



Lt. Gov. Michels presents challenge coins to SDDVA Claims Office staffers.

Lt. Gov. Michels closed his remarks by presenting the Sioux Falls SDDVA Claims Office staff with a challenge coin. The coin is to serve as a reminder of all that they have accomplished, but to challenge them everyday to reach out and assist our veterans. Receiving a coin is a sense of pride for a job well done, a very special honor, or to prove one's allegiance.

In addition, Big Paws Canine Academy and Foundation, made it official and presented SDDVA Program Manager Steve Oliva with ownership papers for Master Chief, his service dog and companion.



Sec. Zimmerman, Gail Dickerson and Steve Oliva

PAST PRESIDENTS AND RETIREES RECOGNIZED

During the SDDVA Annual Benefits School, the South Dakota Veterans Service Officers Association recognized some of their leaders.

Roy Farabee, secretary for the SDVSOA, first recognized recent retired VSO's that had completed over ten years of service.

VSO's recognized were Wayne Vetter (Faulk County), Richard Beringer (Bon Homme County), and Kenneth Lindblad (Beadle and Sanborn Counties)

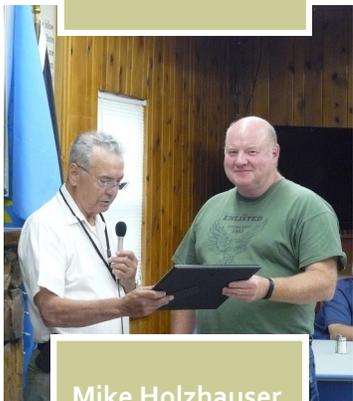


Wayne Vetter

Roy Farabee recognizing Wayne Vetter for his years of service



Roy Farabee recognizing Richard Beringer for his years of service



Mike Holzhauser



Roy Farabee recognizing Ken Lindblad service



The Association also recognized past president's Wayne Vetter and Michael Holzhauser.

Board Members	Name	Office Phone
President	Gordon Richard (Spink County)	605.472.4589
Secretary/Treasurer	Roy Farabee (Charles Mix and Gregory Counties)	605.487.7691 or 605.775.2672
Vice President	Robert Dunsmore (Dewey County and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe)	605.865.3539
Judge Advocate	Dennis Evenson (Deuel County)	605.874.2111
District I Representative	Mike Wiley (Day County)	605-345-9512
District II Representative	Ron Hoffer (Edmunds County)	605.287.4629
District III Representative	Terry Cousins (Todd and Tripp Counties)	605.856.2567 or 605.842.1300
District IV Representative	Angella Sutton (Meade County)	605.347.7623
District V Representative	Geri Opsal (Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate)	605.698.4400 (Ext. 110)

BLACK HILLS CORP AWARDED 2015 SEC/DEF EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARD

The Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve awarded Black Hills Corporation of Rapid City with the 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award during a ceremony at the Pentagon, Aug. 21.

Black Hills Corp. was one of 15 employers from across the nation that received the prestigious award, the nation's highest honor given to employers for exceptional support of National Guard and Reserve employees.

Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work lauded the recipients for their support, saying their sacrifices helped make the military contributions by members of the National Guard and Reserve possible.

"These extraordinary contributions that [Guardsmen and Reservists] have provided could not have been made without the extraordinary support from the group of civilians and citizens, business leaders and employers, who have really allowed them to not be worried about coming back to a job," said Work.

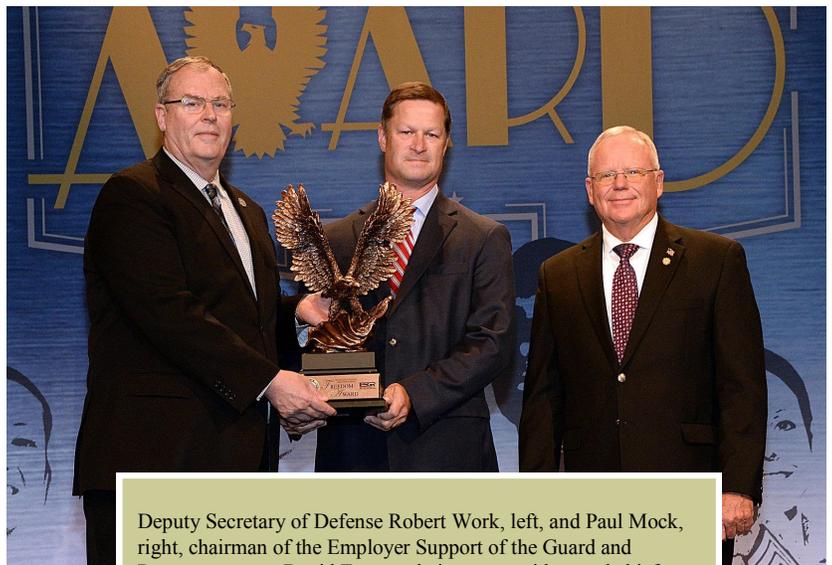
Black Hills Corp. was nominated for the award by Corey Virtue, an employee and soldier in the South Dakota Army National Guard's 235th Military Police Company.

"Black Hills Corporation is honored to receive a 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award," said David Emery, the chairman, president and chief executive officer of Black Hills Corp. "The members of the National Guard and Reserve sacrifice much while serving and defending our country. As an employer, accommodating their military service is simply the right thing to do."

Virtue, who deployed to Afghanistan for nearly a year in 2013, said the company's concern was always evident. "Anytime I am doing something with the Guard, my supervisors are always supportive," he said. "They sent care packages and were always checking up on my wife, who was pregnant with our fifth child, while I was gone." "Basically, my family knows that Black Hills Corporation is on stand-by if anything goes wrong," said Virtue. "They are our second family. They make it easy to do what I love on the civilian side, by not taking away from my military career."

Emery thanked all Black Hills employees for their dedication. "This award reflects not only on our company's culture, but also on our employees' commitment to service, whether to our country as a member of the military, or to the energy customers and communities we serve," said Emery.

The 2015 Freedom Award recipients were selected from 2,960 nominations received from Guardsmen and Reservists for going far beyond what the federal law requires to support their military employees.



Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, left, and Paul Mock, right, chairman of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, present David Emery, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Black Hills Corporation

REP. NOEM RECEIVES OPERATIONAL UPDATE ON SDNG

U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem met with leaders from the South Dakota National Guard Tuesday, Aug. 25, at Camp Rapid to receive an operational overview of the state's nearly 4,200 member force.

The visit brought Noem up to date on the SDNG's current capabilities, operations and future challenges.

Noem, who is serving in her third consecutive term in the U.S. House of Representatives, met with Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG, and senior staff leaders.

"We appreciate Congresswoman Noem taking time out of her schedule to give us an opportunity to give her an operational summary on the current state of the South Dakota National Guard," said Reisch. "There are a number of national issues that impact our organization such as future fighting strength, budget cuts and support for our service members and veterans."

Noem received a briefing, toured facilities and spoke with Soldiers and Airmen to gain additional insight on how these national impacts are effecting, and could continue to affect, the National Guard here in the state.

Topics covered were the National Defense Authorization Act - a national commission to assess the Army's active and reserve components' size and force mix; impacts of the Budget Control Act - across-the-board spending cuts effects on force structure size and operational readiness; and the Aviation Restructure Initiative.

"The National Guard has stepped up to meet the demands of a volatile and dangerous 21st century world," said Rep. Noem. "We have a moral responsibility to ensure their needs are met. As we work toward finalizing FY2016 funding, I am committed to ensuring the National Guard and all our men and women in uniform are made a priority and given the tools and resources necessary to complete the missions ahead. Our continued security and their lives depend on it."

"The SDNG is doing everything it can to maximize training opportunities and resources to remain relevant, ready and reliable in light of continuing DoD cuts, Army restructuring and the effects of sequestration," said Reisch. "The National Guard provides immense value to the taxpayer for domestic and overseas missions at a fraction of the cost to the active duty component."



Sunday - Sept. 6, 2015 - 12pm

VETERANS LABOR DAY RIDE



Everyone is welcome - Come and Show your support for ALL OUR VETERANS.

11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration is at Wagner American Legion.

12 p.m. leave for Springfield, SD. Or at 1 p.m. meet everyone at Terrance Park in Springfield, SD and see the VETERANS MEMORIAL.

Food, Music & Reenactment Demonstration by the 1st Infantry.



Sponsored by Wagner American Legion Riders & Springfield American Legion



“Get Your Motor Running...”

1st Annual PVA Poker Run

Benefit For The



Paralyzed Veterans of America

North Central Chapter

WHEN: September 12, 2015 – 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

WHERE: Sioux Empire Fairgrounds (North Entrance)

ENTRY FEE: \$20.00 PER RIDER

Prizes, Food, Beverages, Music...FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

After Ride Party – 4:00 PM

Prizes awarded – 5:00 PM

**SPONSORED BY:
Sanford Health System
First Bank and Trust
& More**

For more information call: PVA North Central Chapter at 605-336-0494



Upcoming Events

- Sept. 3—Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair
 Sept. 5—727th DAV Poker Run—Brookings National Guard Armory
 Sept. 6—Veterans Day Labor Day Ride (starts at Wagner and ends in Springfield) 11:00 am (CS)
 Sept. 6—Veterans Memorial Dedication—Terrence Park in Springfield—1:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 9—SD Coalition of Military Families Symposium—Spearfish Holiday Inn—8:30 am (MT)
 Sept. 10—VABHHCS Welcome Home—Main Street Square—Rapid City—6:00 pm—9:00 pm (MT)
 Sept. 11 — Veterans Stand Down—Wagner—National Guard Armory—9:00 am—1:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 11—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Rapid City—10:00 am
 Sept. 12—Vietnam Veterans of America State Council Meeting—Pierre Post 8 American Legion—Noon (CT)
 Sept. 12—PVA 1st Annual Poker Run—Sioux Empire Fairgrounds—1:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 15—Eagle Butte Stand Down—Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Veterans Building 10:00 am—1:30
 Sept 15-16—VABHHCS Mental Summits—Rapid City/Hot Springs Campus
 Sept. 16—SD Veterans Council—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Sept. 16—Veterans Town Hall Meeting—Fairgrounds—Mitchell—5:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 17—Veterans Appreciation Day—Watertown
 Sept. 18—POW-MIA Ceremony—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park—6:30 pm (CT)
 Sept. 18—Ellsworth AFB Retiree Appreciation Day— Exhibits 9:00 am—3:00 pm (MDT)—Luncheon 11:00 am—1:00 pm (MDT) - EAFB
 Sept. 19—Agent Orange Town Hall Forum—VFW Post 1273 (420 Main Street) - Rapid City—Two Sessions (one from 9:00 am—noon and one from noon—3:00 pm (MDT))
 Sept. 25—Veterans Stand Down—VFW—Sioux Falls (3601 S. Minnesota Ave.) - 9:00 am—2:00 pm (CT)
 Sept. 25-27—NCPVA Veterans Trapshoot—Crooks
 Oct. 5—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 9—Women Veterans Conference
 Oct. 10—DAV Fall Conference—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls
 Oct. 24—VVA Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting—1519 W. 51st St—Sioux Falls—9:00 am—3:00 pm (CT)
 Nov. 7—Vietnam Veterans of America State Council Meeting—Pierre Post 8 American Legion—Noon (CT)
 Nov. 13—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Hot Springs—10:00 am
 Dec. 8— Governor’s Budget Address—Pierre

2016

- Jan. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Jan. 12—SD Legislative Session Opens—Pierre
 Jan. 14—Veterans Legislative Breakfast—Pierre
 Jan. 27-28—State Tribal Relations Days—Pierre
 Apr. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City
 Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
 South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
 Soldiers and Sailors Building - 425 E Capitol Avenue
 Pierre, SD 57501
 Phone: 605-773-8242
 E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

