



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



SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN ATTENDS MARTENS' HOMECOMING

Last weekend SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman attended the Homecoming Celebration for American Legion State Auxiliary President Melanie Martens.

State President Martens was elected by the membership at the State American Legion Conference in Watertown.

Secretary Zimmerman wished President Martens success in her role as presi-



dent and thanked her and all auxiliary members for all that they do to support and enhance the lives of our veterans.

In the spirit of service, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support the American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, they advocate for veterans, educate citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

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SDNG MUSEUM TO HOST OH-6A PILOT

Retired Major (USA) Thomas Percy Sr. will be visiting the South Dakota National Guard Museum in Pierre Friday, Aug. 19, at 7:00 pm. Percy, who was pilot of the OH-6A on the fateful day it was shot down in Vietnam, will share his stories of the experience.

The OH-6A, serial number 65-13000, located at the South Dakota National Guard Museum was the first OH-6A (LOH) helicopter shot down in Vietnam.

The OH-6A aircraft was designed primarily as a light observation helicopter (LOH, hence the nickname LOach) to locate enemy positions. This was an extremely dangerous mission that required the Cayuse to expose itself to small arms fire from the enemy. It was small arms fire that took down the OH-6A that is located at the museum.

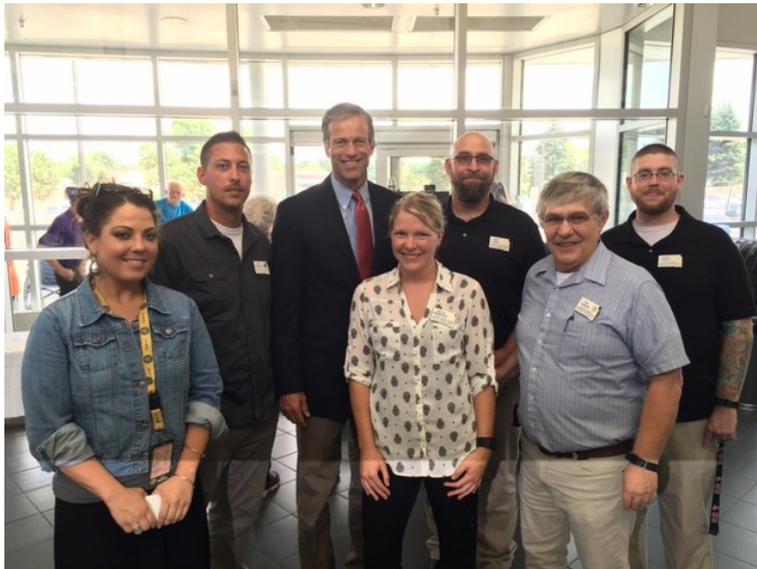
SDDVA REPRESENTED AT AWARD CEREMONY

SDDVA Program Manager Don Thomson and State Veterans Service Officer's Erin Bultje, Caitlyn Zylstra, Dusty Abrahamson, Gerald Lemme and Claims Examiner Joseph Leasure attended an award ceremony at Sioux Falls VA Health Care Center Wednesday.

United States Senator John Thune presented Otto Logan, a faithful volunteer at the VA, with his deceased brother's military medals, including a Purple Heart.

Senator Thune presented Otto with his brother Robert's four medals that he earned while fighting in Europe. Robert, a World War II Veteran, was killed in action back in 1944.

Otto, who is a veteran himself, has been a dedicated volunteer at the VA for seven years. He greets visitors and helps veterans with their appointments.



Front row (left to right): Erin Bultje, Caitlyn Zylstra, and Don Thomson. Back row: Dusty Abrahamson, Senator John Thune, Gerald Lemme and Claims Examiner Joseph Leasure



PROJECT 22 VIEWING AT RAPID CITY ELKS

A viewing of "Project 22" will be held Thursday evening, August 4, at 7:00 pm at the Elks Theatre (512 6th Street) in Rapid City.

In the United States alone, twenty-two veterans commit suicide per day. Project 22 follows two combat-wounded veterans on a mission to find hope. Riding motorcycles from San Francisco to New York, Daniel and Doc speak with veterans about post-war challenges that lead to suicide and the healing veterans are finding in alternative forms of therapy such as sailing, pottery, education, service dogs and more.

During the 6,500 mile journey, the riders interviewed leading researchers, mental health clinicians and educators who specialize in Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress, as well as Combat Stress.



SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN ATTENDS VABHHCS RIBBON CUTTING

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman joined elected officials, community leaders and veterans at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new, surgical suites at the VA Black Hills Health Care Center in Fort Meade.

Director Horsman reported that the five-year project came in just under \$9 million dollars with three new operating rooms for patients.

The 36 thousand square foot facility brings in state-of-the-art technology - with equipment to perform anything from cataract to joint replacement. The facility serves 19 thousand veterans across the state, including some from as far away as Minnesota and Iowa. The new suites replaced old operating rooms - which will also soon undergo renovations.

Horsman reported that doctors perform up to ten surgeries a day and this new space affords the patient a better experience.



SOCIETY OF AMERICAN INDIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES PRESENTS AWARD TO SD GUARDSMAN

The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) presented their Military Meritorious Service Award to a South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier, June 9, during the 13th Annual SAIGE National Training Conference in Catoosa, Oklahoma.

Master Sgt. James Dean Bad Wound, of Rapid City, received the Military Meritorious Service Award, which honors military members and Department of Defense civilian employees who have supported the DoD mission, overseas contingency operations, or whose attributes best epitomized the qualities and core values of their respective military service or other DoD component.

Bad Wound, a member of Joint Force Headquarters, has served on the South Dakota National Guard Diversity Council for the past 10 years, spearheading many projects assisting in relationships with the SDNG and Native American communities in South Dakota.

Most recently, Bad Wound served as chairman of the Native American Heritage Month - Oceti Sakowin Code Talker Celebration Subcommittee of the SDNG Diversity Council.

The subcommittee developed the idea of honoring Native American Veterans by focusing on the code talker legacy, which was largely unknown in South Dakota, the National Guard and even the nine tribes located within the boundaries of the state.

The honoring ceremonies, included a traveling exhibit featuring bronze replicas of the gold Congressional Medallions presented to each tribe in honor of the veterans from the tribe that served as code talkers during World War I and World War II. Additionally, the ceremonies featured guest speakers from the SDNG who spoke on the code talker legacy and tribal affiliation, and family members of code talker veterans who spoke of their family member and their legacy.

In addition to Bad Wound, the SDNG also nominated Chief Warrant Officer 4 William White and Master Sgt. Edith Clemmons for the SAIGE Military Meritorious Service Award. White and Clemmons, who worked alongside Bad Wound on the Code Talker Celebration Subcommittee, were both finalists for the award.

SAIGE is a national non-profit organization advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native people in the government workforce by providing them the necessary tools in their efforts to reach their full potential.

The Code Talker Exhibit is now on display at the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Pierre.



Upcoming Events

- Aug 4—VABHHCS Hero and Patriot Night—Main Street Square—Rapid City—6:00—9:00 pm (MT)
 Aug. 7—Purple Heart Memorial Dedication - Capitol Lake—Pierre—1:00 pm (CT)
 Aug. 7—American Legion Freedom Ride—State Veterans Home—Hot Springs 8:30 am (MT)
 Aug. 22-25—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota
 Sep. 1—Veterans Day at the State Fair—Huron - Program at 10:30 at the Freedom Stage
 Sep. 2—Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Game— Sioux Falls Stadium (1001 North West Avenue) - 6:00 pm (CT)
 Sep. 3—DAV Brookings Chapter 22 and 727 Transportation Unit Poker Run—Brookings National Guard Armory—10:00 am (CT)
 Sep. 9—Veterans Stand Down—Wagner Armory
 Sep. 14—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Sep. 16—National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony—Sioux Falls Veterans Memorial Park—6:30 pm (CT)
 Sep. 23—Veterans Stand Down—VFW—Sioux Falls
 Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 8—DAV Fall Conference—DAV—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
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- Feb 10-12—SD American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
 Jun 15-18—SD American Legion State Conference—Watertown



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