



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



## SDDOM/SDDVA RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNITED WAY

Both the South Dakota Department of the Military and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs were recently recognized for their contributions to the Capital Area United Way.

Both Departments contributed at the Capital Club Senator Level (\$500 to \$999). The Capital Area United Way set a goal of \$575,000 for the 2015-2016 "Be Someone's Hero" campaign and they made it!

The Capital Area United Way is an independent, non-profit entity designed to help our community meet its health and human care needs. Through its community-wide fundraising efforts, the Capital Area United Way helps to support 50 programs and services offered through 20 local United Way funded agencies.

Through a strong volunteer system, United Way brings together business, government, and committed people to address local health and human service needs in Hughes and Stanley counties.



John Fette serves as our coordinator for this fundraiser and has achieved 100% participation for numerous years. Thanks John, for a job well done.

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United Way



Capital Area United Way

## DAVISON COUNTY HOLDS ADDITIONAL KOREAN PEACE MEDAL CEREMONY

Last week the Davison County Veteran Service Office, in conjunction with the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, hosted another beautiful Korean Ambassador Peace Medal ceremony. Four veterans and 13 widows were presented medals.

SDDVA Field Service Officer Kevin Bowen served as the master of ceremony. Keynote speakers were SDDVA Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard and Korean War Veterans Association Commander Melvin Lubbers. The United States National Anthem was sung by the Mitchell Area Children's Choir. SDDVA Program Manager Steve Oliva and Field Service Officer Michael Maske also were in attendance at the ceremony.



Hugh Holmes of the American Legion Post #18, lent his print of John C. Green's "Forgotten Heroes", for part of the background setting.

Hats off to Jessica, Maria and their families for all their hours of hard work in organizing yet another successful event for our heroes. There was about 170 people in attendance for this event.





**OPEN HOUSE  
SIOUX FALLS VA  
MARCH 29, 2016**

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*Honoring Vietnam Veterans on the  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War*

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To honor and thank Vietnam Veterans, as well as their families,  
for their service and sacrifices.

There will be commemorative gifts and an unveiling of special exhibit of  
artifacts and Vietnam War memorabilia in the Veterans Museum at 4:00 PM.

Questions call 605-333-6889

*A time for camaraderie, sharing stories, but most of all....*

**A WELCOME HOME FOR VIETNAM VETS.**

## GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Wednesday, March 30, 2016, as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day," calling on all South Dakotans to recognize the courage, service and sacrifice of the men and women who served during the Vietnam War.

"The words 'thank you for your service' and 'welcome home' are some of the most encouraging words for those who served," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "It is important to pause, remember and recognize the bravery of all who served and to do what we can to help heal the wounds of war."

Through the establishment of an annual statewide Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans recognition day, South Dakotans can express their appreciation and honor the men and women who served during the Vietnam War.

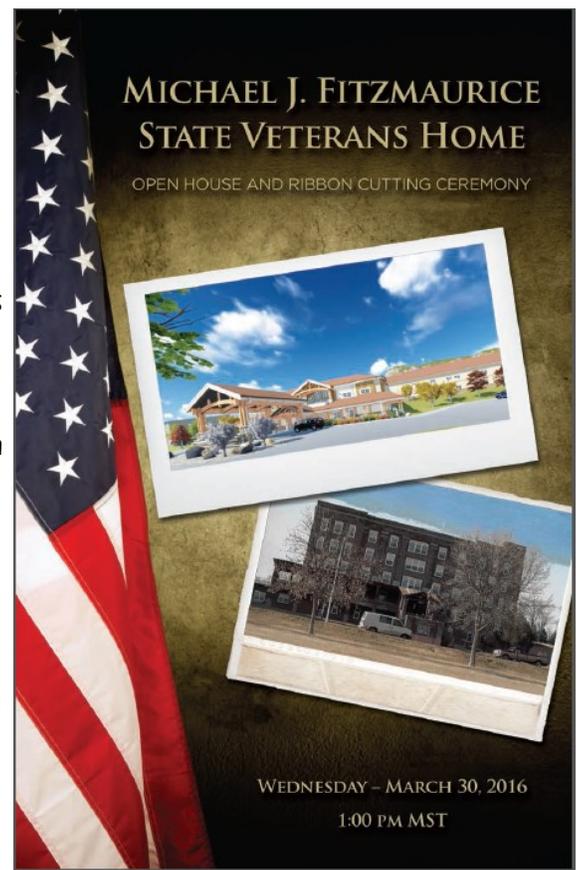
## SDDVA ANNOUNCES DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR NEW STATE VETERANS HOME

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will hold a dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the new Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. The ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. (MT) on Wednesday, March 30, 2016.

The ceremony will be held on the campus of the current Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home at 2500 Minnekahta Ave. in Hot Springs.

Planned speakers for the ceremony include Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Lt. Gov. Matt Michels, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Larry Zimmerman and Medal of Honor recipient Michael J. Fitzmaurice.

The new state of the art facility incorporates the latest in nursing home construction design and staffing concepts and has 76 skilled and 24 independent living rooms. This two-story facility has eight neighborhoods/households arranged around administrative and support amenities in the center. Residents have access to physical therapy, speech therapy, fitness, recreational opportunities, workshops and an auditorium. The community space is located in the center of the building on the main floor and includes a chapel, cafeteria, postal service, pharmacy, barber shop and community room to name a few.



## 45 YEARS AGO FITZMAURICE AWARDED MEDAL OF HONOR

How ironic it is that next week we will all gather in Hot Springs for the dedication of the new Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home and forty-five years ago (March 23, 1971) our special South Dakota Hero was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism in Vietnam.

In addition to serving his country for 23 years in the military, Michael dedicated 24 years of his life to serving his fellow veterans while working at the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center.

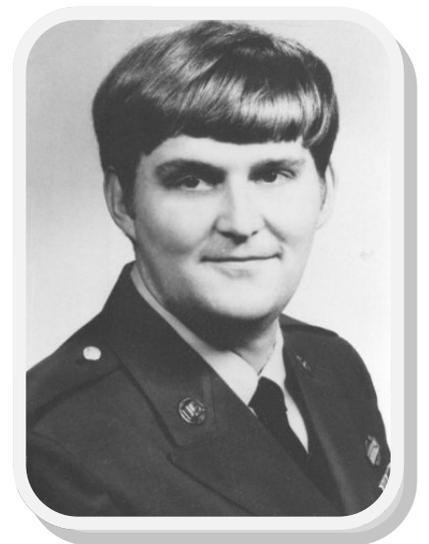
Mike will be joining us at the dedication next week and we encourage all of you to seek him out and



His citation reads —

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sp4c. Fitzmaurice, 3d Platoon, Troop D, distinguished himself at Khe Sanh. Sp4c. Fitzmaurice and 3 fellow soldiers were occupying a bunker when a company of North Vietnamese sappers infiltrated the area. At the onset of the attack Sp4c. Fitzmaurice observed 3 explosive charges which had been thrown into the bunker by the enemy. Realizing the imminent danger to his comrades, and with complete disregard for his personal safety, he hurled 2 of the charges out of the bunker. He then threw his flak vest and himself over the remaining charge. By this courageous act he absorbed the blast and shielded his fellow-soldiers. Although suffering from serious multiple wounds and partial loss of sight, he charged out of the bunker, and engaged the enemy until his rifle was damaged by the blast of an enemy hand grenade. While in search of another weapon, Sp4c. Fitzmaurice encountered and overcame an enemy sapper in hand-to-hand combat. Having obtained another weapon, he returned to his original fighting position and inflicted additional casualties on the attacking enemy. Although seriously wounded, Sp4c. Fitzmaurice refused to be medically evacuated, preferring to remain at his post. Sp4c. Fitzmaurice's extraordinary heroism in action at the risk of his life contributed significantly to the successful defense of the position and resulted in saving the lives of a number of his fellow soldiers. These acts of heroism go above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflect great credit on Sp4c. Fitzmaurice and the U.S. Army.

thank him for his unselfish actions and his life-long service to this great country. Take a moment and visit his memorial on the front of the campus.



# Upcoming Events

- Mar. 30—MJF Veterans Home Open House—1:00 pm (MT)  
Apr. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)  
April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City—Adoba  
Apr. 18-19—SDCMF Symposium—Black Hills State University Center—Rapid City  
Apr. 20—Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls  
Apr. 23—Boots to Business Reboot Program—SD Technology Business Center—Sioux Falls (8:30—4:00)  
May 10—SDDVA Mini Conference—Rapid City—TREA—1981 Centre Street  
May 11—SDDVA Mini Conference Pierre—American Legion Post 8—520 S. Pierre Street  
May 12—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings—City/County Building—520 3rd Street—Suite 300  
May 14—South Dakota Vietnam Veterans of America Meeting/Election—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre  
(election at 11:00 am (CT) and meeting at 1:00 pm (CT))  
May 14—2nd Annual PVA Poker Run and Concert—Sanford Pentagon—Sioux Falls  
Jun. 9-12—VFW State Convention—The Lodge at Deadwood  
Jun. 16-19—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota—Watertown  
Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)  
Jul. 23-24—Sioux Falls Air Show  
Aug. 22-25—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota  
Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)

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