



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



DEDICATION OF THE NEW STATE VETERANS HOME IN HOT SPRINGS

Everyone of us has a hero in his or her life – someone who has done astonishing things like the hundreds of thousands of men and women who took the oath, signed on the bottom line and served this great country. All of these people are our heroes and should be honored for their selfless commitment to serving our country.

How unique it was for the dedication of the new state veterans home to be held on March 30th—Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day!!!!!! It gave us all a great opportunity to thank our Vietnam Veterans.

Shannon Alder once said, “The greatest heroes in life are those that never give up on someone or something. They stick it out and make it work. They sacrifice things in their life, in order to help others. They work hard and overcome adversity.” The men and women that worked on the new state veterans home are special heroes. They rolled up their sleeves, faced the challenges head-on, worked through the bumps and hurdles and ensured that South Dakota would have a new state-of-the-art state veterans home. Our special thanks to the Governor, Lt. Governor, Legislators, Department staff, contractors, sub-contractors, the VA,

Dept. of Health, and the Office of State Engineering staff; for a job well done. Thank you for being the heroes that took care of our heroes.



L. to R. Randy Meyers, Dep. Secretary Pollard, Sec. Zimmerman, Andy Scull, Michael J. Fitzmaurice, Lt. Gov. Michels, Brad Richardson and Tom Inman.

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STATE VETERANS HOME DEDICATION (CONTINUED)

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman opened the dedication ceremony for the new home and shared the podium with Lt. Gov. Michels, Supt. Brad Richardson, Sculptor Darwin Wolf, Chaplain Nelson, President of Scull Construction Andy Scull, and Medal of Honor recipient Michael J. Fitzmaurice.

In his opening remarks Secretary Zimmerman stated that “the State Veterans Home opened in November of 1889, and today we re-opened the State Home on the same acres of our former territories.”

Zimmerman applauded those who worked diligently to bring this dream to fruition. “It took a team to build this state of the art facility,” said Zimmerman. “To this administration, the Legislature, the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, the contractors, our veteran’s service organizations, volunteers and our fantastic staff, we say thank you.”

Many of us know Lt. Gov. Michels as the Lt. Gov., a nurse, a lawyer, and a former legislator; but this week we had the opportunity to be in the classroom with Historian Michaels, as he articulated the history of the State Veterans Home from Civil War to today. He shared the story of Black Jack Logan’s persistent to build soldier’s homes for veterans.



South Dakota was fortunate to have a modern-day Black Jack Logan (alias Lt. Gov. Michels) who committed the time and energy to see that the construction

of this new home had the support it needed from both the federal and the state level.

“This new facility is something we can all be very proud of,” said Lt. Gov. Michels. “It’s a quality, well-designed building that will serve South Dakota’s veterans for generations to come. It’s also a facility that will allow us to keep energy costs down. The building is classified at the LEED Silver category. The contractors installed low-flow fixtures to help reduce water consumption. The Biomass Plant burns wood chips from the Black Hills Forest, instead of using fuel oil for heating and cooling. This won’t just curb emissions, but save the state a substantial amount of money.”

In his closing remarks Lt. Gov. Michels, thanked the residents and all those here who have served. “It’s because of you that we have the freedom to worship in the way we choose, the right to protect ourselves, and the ability to choose our leaders,” said Michels. “Thanks to your service, there is peace in our homeland and we have the freedom to pursue our own American dream.”

The message repeated over and over by all of the speakers was that this new facility was one step toward repaying our veterans for putting their lives on the line for us.



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STATE VETERANS HOME DEDICATION (CONTINUED)

Whenever you hear the word ‘hero’ you automatically put the word ‘super’ in front of it.

Superheroes have set the standards pretty high because they’re this ideal person who always puts others before themselves, they’re good people right down to their bones and they will not think twice about giving their lives in order to save yours. But surely this type of person can’t exist? Well, there have been a number of people throughout history whose actions have changed the world, whether that it was their intention or not, their actions and conviction in doing the right thing have made them heroes.

Our hero and the hero that the State Veterans Home is named after, Michael J. Fitzmaurice, was able to join us for the ceremony, along with 42 of his family and friends.

Mike thanked all of the leaders that led the charge in the creation of this new home. He said, “Our heroes deserve to have a beautiful place they call home.”



KOREAN HEROES IN HOT SPRINGS RECOGNIZED

Mathew Steffen, Veterans Service Officer, at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, hosted an honor and remember ceremony for Korean Veterans, spouses and family this week in Hot Springs.



Sunny Lee, Volunteer Liaison/Coordinator for the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs in Republic of Korea, was on hand for the ceremony and shared a beautiful heartfelt message with the heroes.



Sunny, SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman and Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard shared messages with the guests and presented the medals to our heroes.

Those receiving medals were Korean Veterans Dean Focult and Thomas Odell. Brigetta Thompson, Helen Bright and Nancy Mileusnich also received medals in honor of their husbands.

Following the ceremony, heroes, dignitaries and guests shared coffee, cake and stories!



L to R: Sec. Zimmerman, Sunny Lee, Mat Steffen, Brigetta Thompson, Thomas Odell, Ann Remington, Dean Focault, Nancy Mileusnich, and Helen Bright.

PURPLE UP - HONOR OUR MILITARY CHILDREN

Please join us in honoring our military youth and celebrating Month of the Military Child in April. This is a time for us to recognize and thank our military children for all that they do. There are more than 7,100 military youth in South Dakota - over 3,900 are affiliated with the Army and Air National Guard. Please take the time to personally thank these children.

On Wednesday, April 6th - "In Their Shoes" Parade at Ellsworth Air Force Base at 4 pm. Parade for Air Force and National Guard youth of all ages and their parents in combined recognition of Month of the Military Child, Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Activities for children and families after the parade, as well as a vigil at the Freedom Chapel. One of the SDNG Youth Council Members will be speaking to the youth about being a military child in the National Guard.

On Saturday, April 9, there is a free movie morning at the Elks Theatre in Rapid City. All military youth and families are invited to join the SDNG Child & Youth Program at 10 am to watch "Inside Out" on the main screen. All are welcome!

On Saturday, April 9, Ellsworth Air Force Base is hosting a Month of the Military Child Celebration from 1-3 pm at the PRIDE Hangar on Base. National Guard families are invited to attend and will need to show their military id. Registered children can also participate in a Deployment Line.

On Friday, April 15, wear purple as a visible way to show support, respect, and thanks to our military children.

On Saturday, April 16, there is a free movie morning at West Mall 7 Theatres in Sioux Falls. All military youth and families are invited to join the SDNG Child & Youth Program at 9 am to watch "Inside Out." All are welcome!

On Tuesday, April 19, come celebrate Military Youth Night at Sky Zone Indoor Trampoline Park in Sioux Falls from 3-8 pm. Military youth and families can jump for free for one hour with the purchase of required jump socks.

Celebrating Month of the Military Child
All Military Children and Families
Join us for a FREE movie morning!
Saturday, April 9th, at 10 am
Elks Movie Theatre
512 6th Street
Rapid City, SD




Join the SDNG Child & Youth Program in celebrating military children of all ages

Enjoy a free showing of the movie "Inside Out" on the main screen

Open to all military youth and families—bring your friends!
Concessions will be available for purchase

Help us fill the theatre—spread the word and join us!

Taryn Bloomfield, SDNG Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator
605-737-6919 or taryn.m.bloomfield.c7@mail.mil

Celebrating Month of the Military Child
All Military Children and Families
Join us for a FREE movie morning!
Saturday, April 16th, at 9 am
West Mall 7 Theatres
2101 W. 41st Street
Sioux Falls, SD




Join the SDNG Child & Youth Program in celebrating military children of all ages

Enjoy a free showing of the movie "Inside Out"

Open to all military youth and families—bring your friends!
Concessions will be available for purchase (cash only)

Help us fill the theatre—spread the word and join us!

Taryn Bloomfield, SDNG Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator
605-737-6919 or taryn.m.bloomfield.c7@mail.mil

The Airman & Family Services Flight celebrates Month of the Military Child

KIDS DEPLOYMENT LINE **FREE**

Saturday, April 9, 2016
1 PM to 3 PM
Pride Hangar

Open to the Ellsworth AFB & SDNG Community
Visit <http://www.ellsworthafrc.org/kdl>
for deployment registration and information.
Registration is required for "deploying" kids!

- Month of the Military Child Activities:**
- Static displays and demonstrations from base agencies
 - Climb the rock wall and play in the jumpy castles
 - Sensory tables and other activities
 - Information tables from various on and off-base resources



SDNG CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM

Month of the Military Child

Come join us at Sky Zone in support of the SDNG Child & Youth Program and Month of the Military Child.

On Tuesday, April 19, 2016 from 3-8 PM current and former military personnel and their families jump for one hour FREE with Military ID and purchase of jump socks!

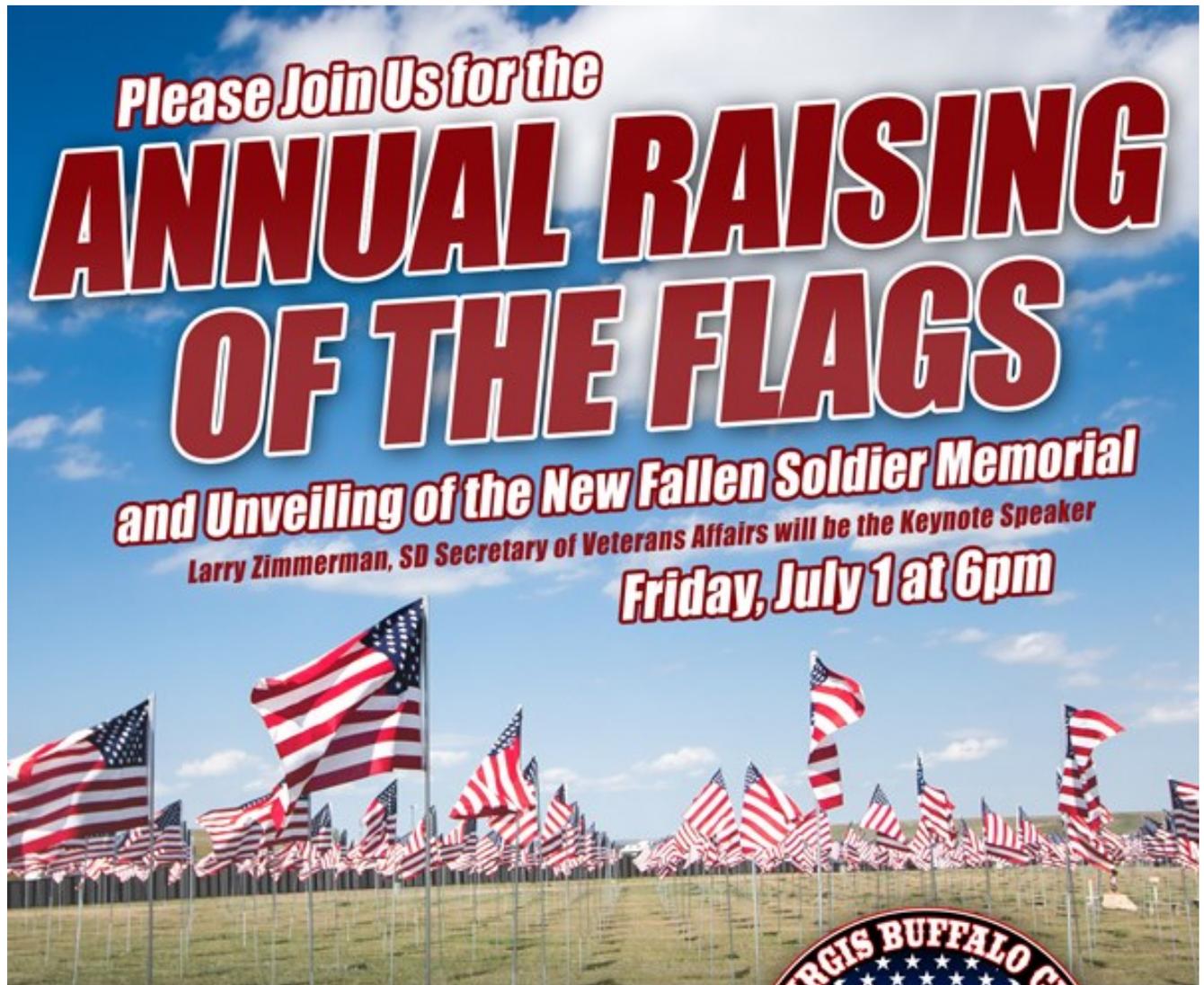
In-store purchase of tickets only based on availability.
No online ticket sales.

Sky Zone
5129 South Solberg Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57108
605-553-9910

Visit us online at
skyzone.com/siouxfalls





This special day will be a time of reflection and celebration honoring all those who have served and all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country.



**Active Duty Military and their families • Veterans and their families
Gold Star Mothers and their families • Friends & Neighbors of the Buffalo Chip**

Located at the Buffalo Chip's West Gate Entrance off Ft Meade Way, near the big engine.
Please RSVP to JessicaC@BuffaloChip.com or call 605-347-9000

NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS TO RECEIVE ENHANCED HIGHER EDUCATION BENEFIT

National Guard members enrolled in a state university or technical school will soon receive enhanced tuition benefits under a bill signed into law by Gov. Dennis Daugaard last week.

House Bill 1203 allows the Board of Regents to make changes to its fee structure to better leverage federal tuition reimbursements for National Guard students. The changes are expected to save National Guard students \$141 per course beginning in the summer of 2016.

In addition, the bill moves state funds for tuition reimbursement from the Department of Military's budget to the Regents' and technical institutes' budgets, so institutions can directly manage costs.

The bill also freezes tuition at South Dakota's public universities and technical schools for resident on-campus students.

BUILDING THREE AT STATE VETERANS HOME COMES DOWN

As guests arrived on the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home Campus for the dedication of the new home, they were able to see yet another chapter in the history book. Building Three, which was originally the

Women's Building, and later became the nursing care unit and dormitory residences for single females and couples, was being demolished.

By the time you read this newsletter it will be just a pile of bricks.



VA AWARDS GRANTS TO DEVELOP TECHNOLOGY TO HELP VETERANS MODIFY HOMES

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the award of \$784,421 in Specially Adapted Housing Assistive Technology (SAHAT) Grants to eligible individuals, researchers, and organizations to develop new technologies that would enhance veterans and servicemembers' ability to live in specially adapted homes.

The SAHAT Grant Program was authorized by Congress to design assistive technologies to expand home modification options for veterans who apply for VA's Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) benefit. Grants of up to \$200,000 have been issued to four selected grantees.

"We're excited and expect that the technology developed with these grants will augment veteran and servicemembers' options for living independently in their own homes," said Curt Coy, Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity. "New technology will serve veterans who currently live in specially adapted houses and open doors for more veterans looking to modify their homes to fit their needs."

The VA issued a Notice of Funding Availability in January for the SAHAT Grant program via the Federal Register and www.Grants.gov. In order to foster competition and best serve the needs of veterans and servicemembers. The VA did not limit the type of entity or individual eligible to apply. There was no restriction on the number of grants that could have been awarded within the \$1 million funding limit.

The VA administers the SAH benefit, which helps veterans and servicemembers with service-connected disabilities purchase or modify a home. Typical adaptations include ramps, wider halls and doors, and wheelchair accessible bathrooms. New technology from the SAHAT Grant Program will be added to the list of home modification options as they become available.

ADAMS JOINS PENNINGTON COUNTY TEAM

Matthew Adams started working at Pennington County Veterans Service office on March 21, 2016.

Matthew enlisted in the Air Force Reserves in 2006, and was stationed out of Minnesota where he was a C-130 Crew Chief. In 2008, he switched to Active Duty with the Army where he was stationed in Fairbanks, Alaska at Fort Wainwright. Matthew has had multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and in 2013 he separated from the Army. Most recently Matthew was involved in linking veterans to various benefits with a focus on education. Matthew moved from Minnesota to Rapid City in December of last year and enjoys outdoor activities and spending time with his two sons.

Matthew's email address is: matthew.adams@pennco.org.

Please welcome Matthew to the Pennington County Veteran Service Office.



Upcoming Events

- Apr. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
April 9—50th Anniversary Recognition Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebration—American Legion Post 22 - 818 E. St. Patrick Street - Rapid City—:00 pm (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 13—Improving Combat Veteran Care Conference—University Center—Sioux Falls—8:00 am (CT)
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. 1—Buffalo Chip Annual Flag Raising Ceremony—West Gate Entrance off Ft. Meade Way—6:00 pm (MT)
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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