Last Friday, South Dakota dedicated the White River Bridge on SD HWY 183 in honor of U.S. Marine Corporal John W. Hutchison.

Hutchison from Presho, was an aerial gunner of a CH-46 helicopter. On August 19, 1968, he was participating in a troop extraction mission in South Vietnam, Quang Tri province. As the helicopter approached the landing zone, bombardment of the area by enemy artillery commenced. Hutchison died when his aircraft was hit by a very large caliber artillery shell and crashed to the ground.

This fallen hero is no longer with us, but his memories live on in the hearts of his loved ones and our state. Naming our South Dakota bridges in honor of our fallen gives us an opportunity of remembrance, reflection, and respect—for honoring the men and women who gave their lives in service to this nation. They cherished liberty and loved freedom enough to lay down their lives to preserve our way of life.
DSS MAKING FUNDING FOR RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE CARE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

The South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) is making $5 million available for residential alternative care programs to support alcohol and drug abuse recovery programs and services for women.

“Sometimes individuals, due to many challenges, are unable to maintain sobriety independently without additional encouragement,” said DSS Cabinet Secretary Laurie Gill. “The funding being made available will aid alternative paths to recovery and give individuals opportunities to develop the life skills needed to regain independence and reunite with their families.”

Through this funding effort, prioritization will be given to programs that support women experiencing substance related issues. The intent of the funding is to assist expanding capacity to serve women in new or underserved areas in South Dakota.

“Individuals with substance use issues are at risk for relapse and continued issues if they return to an unhealthy environment,” Gill said. “Supporting our fellow South Dakotans on their path to recovery aligns with the DSS mission to strengthen families to foster health, wellbeing, and independence.”

Request for Proposal 2784 Residential Alternative Care Programs was published Wednesday, July 6 and seeks providers to deliver services in South Dakota. Proposals are due August 17 by 5 p.m. CST. Copies of the RFP and the cost proposal template can be downloaded at https://dss.sd.gov/keyresources/rfp.aspx.

The grant funding came following passage of Senate Bill 196 during the 2022 South Dakota Legislative Session. For more information about SB196, visit https://sdlegislature.gov/Session/Bill/23452.
SDDVA OUTREACH

SDDVA Field Service Officer Will Huffmon and Custer County Veterans Service Officer Todd Fish worked the Patriot Alley at the Custer 4th of July celebration.

Patriot Alley is a one stop shop that hosts several veterans organizations and partners that assist military members and veterans. Partners included: the VA, military recruiters, Civil Air Patrol, Midwest Honor Flight, veterans service organizations, and Upward Bound.

Fish and Huffmon had the opportunity to speak with numerous veterans about benefits and services.

FERRY NAMED MICHAEL J. FITZMAURICE STATE VETERANS HOME EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Dr. Dyna Ferry has been named the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home employee of the month for July.

Dyna has been caring for veterans at the South Dakota Veteran’s Home for over six years. As the physical therapist, she keeps our residents active. She works hard to help residents be strong and healthy. Dyna has a very positive attitude and is dedicated to the residents and staff. We appreciate her endless dedication, reliability, knowledge, and her leadership.
VA EXPANDS LIVE DONOR CARE AND SUPPORT

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs implemented a final rule, July 1, 2022, describing the authority to provide support for donation procedures and related care to those who donate an organ or bone marrow to veterans for transplants.

Live donor support includes the following at no cost to the live donor, both in-house and in the community:

- Initial screening, tests and studies necessary to qualify an interested individual as a live donor for a specific veteran.
- Medical care and services related to the solid organ or bone marrow donation procedure.
- Post-donation follow-up, to include medical care and services required to address reasonably foreseeable donor health complications resulting directly from the donation procedure for the period specified in the regulation.
- Necessary travel and temporary lodging expenses, including those of one needed attendant or support person for the live donor, at rates prescribed in the regulation.

The final rule also highlights the informed consent rights of live donors, including the right to revoke their consent at any time and for any reason. Additionally, growing awareness and use of paired kidney donations or kidney donation chains in the private sector are voluntary efforts that could benefit veterans, and so these are specifically addressed in the final rule.

“The more live donors we have, the more the gift of life is given to the veterans we serve,” said VA National Director of Clinical Services Manimegalai Murugavel D.N.P. “We know the availability of live organs and bone marrow does not meet the need for transplants nationwide. That’s why it’s important we find live donors to facilitate transplantation within a reasonably short time compared to the wait time of an organ from a deceased donor.”

As part of the integral care required by an eligible veteran in need of a transplant, the VA has offered solid organ transplant services since 1962 and bone marrow transplant services since 1982, including providing care and services for live donors donating a solid organ or bone marrow to a veteran.

On average, the VA receives over 3,500 referrals for transplants each year and performs more than 480 solid organ and bone marrow transplant procedures including live donor transplantation.

Click here to learn more about the VA National Transplant Program.
The final rule is available at the Federal Register.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Jul 9—Sioux Falls Canaries Military Night
Jul 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Jul 16—PFC David Gatton Bridge Dedication—Capitol Lake Visitors Center—Pierre—1:00 pm (CT)
Jul 18—23—National Veterans Golden Age Games—Sioux Falls
Jul 20—SD Veterans Council Meeting—American Legion Post 17 (1412 9th Avenue SW)—Watertown—9:00 am (CT)
Jul 23—American Legion State Commander Feltman’s Homecoming—AmericInn (1981 East King Street)
    Chamberlain—social at 12:00 pm, meal at 1:00 pm, and program at 2:00 pm (CT)
Jul 24—American Legion State Auxiliary President Homecoming—Chester School—12:00 noon (CT)
Aug 6—9—DAV National Convention—Orlando, FL
Aug 6—SSG Dan Cuka Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication—Yankton High School—1:00 pm (CT)
Aug 13—James Haider Bridge Dedication—BG Ernie Edwards Readiness Center—Watertown—10:30 am (CT)
Aug 14—19—Military Order of the Purple Heart National Convention—Rapid City
Aug 15—17—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School—Ramkota—Pierre
Aug 18—23—USS Iowa Veterans Association Reunion—Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center—Rapid City
Aug 20—PVT August Otto Bridge Dedication—Claire City Community Hall—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 22—The Barrel House Day of Giving fundraiser for Midwest Honor Flight—Sioux Falls
Aug 27—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 11 Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center Arena—9:30 pm (CT)
Sep 1—Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair—Huron
Sep 2—RED Day at the State Fair—Group Photo at the Freedom Stage in Huron at 1:45 pm (CT)
Sep 1—5—South Dakota State Fair—Huron
Sep 3—727th/DAV Poker Run—Swiftel Center (824 32nd Avenue)—Brookings—10:00 am (CT)
Sep 5—Labor Day
Sep 10—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 12 Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center Arena—9:30 pm (CT)
Sep 10—Heroes Helping with Horsepower Military Appreciation Event—W. Main Street—Ethan—Festivities begin at 8:00 am (CT)
Sep 14—17—Black Hills Veterans March
Sep 17—CPL Martin Fluegel Bridge Dedication—McCook Central High School—Salem—1:00 pm (CT)
Sep 21—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Rapid City
UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 1—PVT Frederic Schroeder Bridge Dedication—VFW—Madison—1:00 pm (CT)
Oct 1—Midwest Honor Flight Mission 13 Welcome Home Ceremony—Sioux Falls Convention Center Arena—9:30 pm (CT)
Oct 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Oct 10—Native American Day
Oct 15—Midwest Honor Flight Fifth Annual Hangar Dance—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm (CT)
Oct 21—PVA Dueling Pianos Fundraiser—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm (CT)
Nov 5—We’ve Got Your Six Veterans Appreciation Fair—Sturgis Community Center—(1401 Lazelle Street)—Sturgis—11:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
Nov 11—Veterans Day
Nov 11—Capt Tommy Callies Bridge Dedication—Howard High School—9:30 am (CT)
Nov 11—S2 Wayne Bridge Bridge Dedication—Wagner High School—2:00 pm (CT)
Nov 16—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Pierre
Nov 24—Thanksgiving Day
Dec 6—Governor’s Budget Address
Dec 17—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 25—Christmas

2023 Events

Jan 10—Governor’s State of the State Address
Jan 11—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting
Feb 10—12—American Legion Mid-Winter Conference—Huron
Mar 22—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting
May 17—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting
Jun 8—11—American Legion State Conference—Oacoma
Jul 19—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting

2024 Events

Feb 16—18—American Legion Mid-Winter Conference—Deadwood
Jun 20—23—American Legion State Conference—Pierre

2025 Events

Feb 14—16—American Legion Mid-Winter Conference—Oacoma
Jun 19—22—American Legion State Conference—Hurton