This past weekend, the “Old Chronies” motorcycle enthusiast riding group out of Aberdeen rode into Hot Springs and made their annual visit at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

“This group is fueled by passion, generosity, and commitment to give back to those who donned the uniform and served this great country” said MJFSVH Superintendent Chuck Johnson. “We are honored to have this group supporting us and our mission of taking care of our veterans, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with them.”

During their visit, the members of the “Old Chronies” presented the Home with a check for $4,000 to fund extra activities for our residents at the Home.
BIG SIOUX RIVER BRIDGE TO BE DEDICATED IN HONOR OF U.S. ARMY PVT FREDERIC SCHROEDER

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting a State Bridge Dedication Ceremony next month to honor U.S. Army Private Frederic Schroeder.

The ceremony will be Saturday, October 1, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. (CT) at the Madison City Armory (198 VanEps Avenue N) in Madison.

The Big Sioux River Bridge on SD HWY 34, one mile east of Egan, will be dedicated to PVT Schroeder.

Schroeder, whose home of entry was Egan, enlisted in the U.S. Army and began his World War I tour of duty in 1918. Schroeder was killed in action September 30, 1918, while serving with B-Company 361st Infantry Regiment 91st Division.

Naming bridges in honor of our combat veterans who died while serving their country is an initiative of Governor Kristi Noem and the South Dakota Departments of Military, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs.

“Whenever and wherever this nation has called, in times of darkness and danger, as well as in times of peace and prosperity, veterans have been there and have proudly carried the torch of liberty for all to see,” said Greg Whitlock, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

“Our fallen heroes are no longer with us, but their memories live on in the hearts of their loved ones and our state,” said Whitlock. “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.”
HIGHLY DECORATED VIETNAM WAR COMBAT AVIATOR TO BE HONORED IN PIERRE

The Pierre Regional Airport’s “The Eagles Gallery,” featuring artwork and artifacts pertaining to aircraft flown by historically significant South Dakota veterans, will accept the latest addition on Friday, September 16 at a presentation event from 4:30pm - 5:45pm. The public is invited with special emphasis on Vietnam War Veterans and their families.

Wade Hubbard, of Pierre, accumulated a remarkable 439 combat missions, survived being shot down over enemy-held Cambodia and was awarded five Distinguished Flying Crosses (DFC) as well as the Purple Heart medal. The artwork is of a particular F-4 Phantom II jet aircraft that played an extraordinary role during Hubbard’s notable military service.

Distinguished Flying Cross Society chairman Woody Gilliland expressed his appreciation for the moment, “Wade’s five DFCs are extraordinary — we’re not only thrilled to see him recognized by South Dakotans, we’re also humbled to have him represent our values of Achievement, Courage and Education. This is a great honor for Wade and the city of Pierre!”

The Pierre-Fort Pierre Rotary Club has played a Patron role in The Eagles Gallery. Club President, Lori Simpson, stated “Rotary’s motto is Service Above Self. The men whose airplanes and stories will be displayed in The Eagles Gallery embodied that motto and represent the extraordinary actions of South Dakotans who responded and continue to respond to the call of service. Our Club is proud to support this effort.”

Pierre City Commissioner, Jamie Huizenga stated, “These stories are not just memories. They’re inspiring to us now. I’ve known Wade for many years and to see him recognized for his courage and humility is really terrific. I hope the whole community shows up to say thank you.”

Artist John Mollison believes Vietnam War Veteran stories can provide powerful inspiration for the future. “The Vietnam War contains highly valuable stories that can make people today more successful in business, politics and community life. Their history has often been misunderstood and hidden under myth and inconvenience. We overlook their voice at our peril but when we listen and learn, we can grow so much stronger for tomorrow.”
CITY OF SIoux FALLS GIFTS ADDITIONAL LAND TO SDDVA

The City of Sioux Falls recently bestowed an additional 14 acres of land to the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. This land is adjacent to the original 60 acres the city gifted to the Department for the construction of a state veterans cemetery.

The cemetery was dedicated on Memorial Day 2021, and since that time, over 400 veterans and their loved ones have been interred and more than 1,200 pre-burial applications have been submitted.

Aaron Pollard, deputy secretary for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs says “Serving veterans and their families is a labor of love for the Department’s team. This extends to the mayor, the city council and everyone in Sioux Falls that supports the cemetery and its mission. The gifting of this land is an affirmation that the City of Sioux Falls is committed to veterans and a deep partnership that exists with the State of South Dakota.”

“Our community continues to show strong support for veterans through a variety of avenues—from supporting homeless veterans through the Veterans Community Project to recently hosting the National Veterans Golden Age Games,” said Mayor Paul TenHaken. “Thanks to the vision and collaboration of community leaders and officials, the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery opened last year, offering a dignified final resting place for eligible veterans and their spouses. This year, in honor of veterans and their families, the City is pleased to provide an additional land gift to support the future needs of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery.”

“With the first endowing of 60 acres of land, the State of South Dakota established a beautiful cemetery that meets the burial needs of our veterans,” said Rick Kiley, former Sioux Falls city councilor. “The intent of this additional gift of 14 acres is to address immediate as well as future needs of our veterans and the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery. This project has been a labor of love. I thank the Mayor and Sioux Falls City Council for their assistance, and I look forward to the City’s continued support of our veterans.”

The South Dakota Veterans Cemetery is the first federally funded, state-owned, and operated, veteran’s cemetery in South Dakota and will provide burial options for more than 28,000 veterans and their eligible dependents. Burial options at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery include traditional in-ground caskets, in-ground cremains, columbarium/niches, and scatter garden.
Bob Etzkorn, Physical Plant Manager, at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, has been named “employee of the month” for September.

Bob has worked for the State of South Dakota for more than 29 years, the past seven of which have been at the State Veterans Home. He is known for his kindness, compassion, and cheerful attitude and his willingness to always help others.

He is not afraid to take on difficult tasks, lend a helping hand, or provide guidance. Bob is a true leader and we are so fortunate to have him on the team at Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

Phyllis Diller once said, “A smile is a curve that sets everything straight!”

Bob, again, congratulations, and thanks for always sharing that beautiful smile with us!
POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Governor Kristi Noem has proclaimed Friday, September 16, 2022, as “POW/MIA Recognition Day,” calling on all South Dakotans to pay special honor to the Americans who have been prisoners of war, to those who remain missing in action, and to the families and friends of these valiant servicemembers.

“While we are grateful to all of those who have served our nation, this day is designated to remember and recognize the sacrifices endured by those members of the Armed Forces of the United States who were held as prisoners of war or remain missing in action,” said Greg Whitlock, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Whitlock encourages all South Dakotans to set aside time September 16th to honor the POW/MIA’s who fought to protect our freedoms and lost theirs, as well as remember those engaged in today’s struggle to guard our way of life for future generations.

“In their service to our country, former prisoners of war and those missing in action have sacrificed mightily to maintain the promise of liberty that we hold dear,” said Whitlock. “POW/MIA Day affords all of us a great opportunity to reaffirm our vow to never forget the courage of our nation’s staunchest defenders – our POWs and MIAs. We owe them and their families our gratitude.”

The state of South Dakota continues to support efforts to account for every servicemember classified as Missing in Action.

Executive Proclamation
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, seven South Dakotans are still missing from the Vietnam War, 35 are unaccounted for from the Korean War, and 315 from World War II; and,

Whereas, the families and friends of these unaccounted-for veterans still await recovery and identification of their loved ones’ remains or, if determined unrecoverable, certainty regarding their fates; and,

Whereas, on POW/MIA Recognition Day, we pause to acknowledge, with deep reverence, the brave Americans who were held in captivity and those whose fates have never been resolved, remembering that their families continue to suffer; and,

Whereas, we recognize that our nation feels the cost of war long after the last battle is fought and refuse to allow the sacrifices of our brave servicemembers to go unrecognized; and,

Whereas, now and forever, South Dakotans will stand with the families and friends of servicemembers as they await news of their loved ones who are deployed overseas; and,

Whereas, the State of South Dakota fully supports the national commitment to account as fully as possible for the Americans still missing from our nation’s wars:

Now, Therefore, I, Kristi Noem, Governor of the State of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim September 16, 2022, as

PRISONER OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION RECOGNITION DAY

in South Dakota.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this First Day of August in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Two.

Kristi Noem, Governor
Attest:
Steven J. Barnett, Secretary of State
Recovery is possible for everyone and to help spread the news, Governor Kristi Noem has proclaimed September as Behavioral Health Recovery Month in South Dakota.

“Recovery is a process that does not happen overnight,” said South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) Cabinet Secretary Laurie Gill. “However, we as family members and friends can support those we love who may be working towards recovery.”

In FY2022, through funding from DSS, over 17,000 South Dakotans received treatment for a mental health disorder, and more than 11,000 received treatment for a substance use disorder.

“Recovery is more than abstaining from a substance or behavior,” Gill said. “It is a process of improving a person’s overall health and wellness, becoming self-reliant and striving to reach their fullest potential. Everyone’s recovery experience is different and that’s okay. We are in this together.”

DSS supports prevention and early intervention, treatment, and recovery support services across the state of South Dakota and provides a variety of resources individuals can access in their recovery journey. To learn more about recovery and resources, visit dss.sd.gov and click on the Behavioral Health tab.
**WEIGHT OF HONOR FILM SCREENING**

The Sioux Falls VA Medical Center and Augustana University will be hosting a film screening of the documentary “The Weight of Honor,” on Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

The screening is intended for caregivers and community partners as part of National Family Caregivers Month.

In-person participation is limited, but virtual attendance is unlimited and open to anyone. The VA will be giving priority to caregivers of veterans for in-person attendance to this event. Please note that if you are a caregiver of a veteran who is VA eligible, the VA can work with you ahead of time in setting up respite so you may attend this event in person if you so choose.

If you have any questions or would like to register, please contact Anna Rasmussen whose information is listed on the flyer.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Sep 9—11—PVA Annual Trapshoot—Crooks Gun Club
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 12—PVA Doug Brown Memorial Hunt—Howard
Sep 14—17—Black Hills Veterans March
Sep 15—Veterans Stand Down—Holiday Inn Convention Center (505 N. 5th Street)—Rapid City—10:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
Sep 16—Sioux Falls POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony—Veterans Park (1021 W. Bailey Street)—Sioux Falls—6:30 pm (CT)
Sep 17—CPL Martin Fluegel Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication—McCook Central High School—Salem—1:00 pm (CT)
Sep 19—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser at Texas Road House—Sioux Falls—4:00 pm—9:00 pm (CT)
Sep 23—Veterans Stand Down—SD Military Heritage Alliance (1600 W. Russell) —Sioux Falls—9:00 am (CT)
Sep 28—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—American Legion—Rapid City—9:00 am—noon (MT)
UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 1—PVT Frederic Schroeder Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication—Madison City Armory—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 8—Midwest Honor Flight Elvis Concert Fundraiser—Sanford Event Barn (2510 E. 54th Street N)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm (CT)
Oct 10—Native American Day
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 Fallen Hero Bridge Dedication—Howard High School—9:30 am (CT)
Nov 11—S2 Wayne Bridge Fallen Hero 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—Huron

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military [https://military.sd.gov/](https://military.sd.gov/)
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs [https://vetaffairs.sd.gov](https://vetaffairs.sd.gov)
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