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SD Bridge to be Dedicated in Honor of U.S. Army PFC David R. Gatton

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting a State Bridge Dedication Ceremony next month to honor U.S. Army Private First Class David R. Gatton.

The ceremony will be Saturday, July 16, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. (CT) at the Capitol Lake Visitors Center in Pierre.

The White River Bridge on US HWY 83, south of Murdo will be dedicated to PFC Gatton.

Gatton, whose home of entry was Harrold, enlisted in the U.S. Army and began his Vietnam tour of duty on September 11, 1966. His squad was in an ambush position on a road crossing near Phuoc Vinh when their patrol contacted a large enemy company. During the engagement, Gatton was fatally wounded by mortar fragments and died December 29, 1966.

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.”

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