



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO
AMERICA'S VETERANS

Disabled American Veterans Department of South Dakota

Quarterly Bulletin

1519 W 51st St • Sioux Falls, SD 57105

605.332.6866

SD.dav.org/01 and www.dav.org

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Vol XXIV, No. 4 April 2023

83RD ANNUAL CONVENTION - MAY 5-6, 2023 - DAV STATE HEADQUARTERS

SUCCESS IS BEST WHEN IT'S SHARED

at Swanson O'Connor Chapter 13

by Mark Wolf 1st Jr. Vice Commander

This past weekend your chapter attended our third event for 2023. As you recall your chapter had participated in the Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association and the Hub City Radio Big Boy Toy Show - Winter the very same weekend of February 4th at opposite ends of Aberdeen.

These were both challenging events that somehow became scheduled on the same weekend. Because of the extra effort and hard work our volunteers put in as a team, we were very successful.

Hub City Radio Big Boy Toy Show - Spring was held at the Expo building at the Brown County Fair Grounds. Here again, participating members did a great job going above and beyond in just setting up and tearing-down following a simple schedule.

Combined with dedicated volunteer staffing and a bit of sales competition amongst the volunteers representing who our chapter is in our membership, the event was a huge success!



Aberdeen community event BIG BOY TOY SHOW - SPRING was held on March 25, 2023. Pictured left to right: Chapter member, DAV driver Dough Roggow, Chapter member, DAV driver Tom Schmitt, Chapter member, Adjutant Mark Wolf

DAV & AUXILIARY CONVENTION LODGING AND REGISTRATION MAY 5-6TH 2023

The DAV Department of South Dakota 83rd Annual Department and 71st Auxiliary State Convention will be held May 5-6th, 2023, at the DAV Department of South Dakota Headquarters, 1519 W. 51st, St, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota - (605) 332-6866.

LODGING: The Comfort Inn & Suites, 3721 W. Avera Drive, Sioux Falls, SD 57108, at (605) 275-9577 or (605) 275-9585. YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN HOTEL RESERVATIONS!

Rooms have been reserved under the name of DAV. Please mention this when making your reservations - Group Account - 4485675. More rooms can be added if an early turnout warrants it. Your reservation MUST BE MADE BY April 1, 2023.

REGISTRATION, LUNCHEON AND BANQUET:

Registration includes, two (2) Lunches, one (1) Friday Evening Meal and one (1) Saturday Evening Commander's Banquet. Registration cost is \$90.

Members wanting to attend only certain events can purchase individual meal tickets as follows. Forget-Me-Not Luncheon is \$20. Awards Luncheon is \$20. Friday Evening Meal is \$25. Commander's Banquet is \$35. **Cutoff date for meals is April 25th, 2023.** Any special meals must be requested at the time of registration

MARK YOUR MEAL SELECTIONS HERE:

- Commander's Reception - Thursday
- Forget-Me-Not Lunch - Friday
- Friday Evening Meal
- Awards Lunch - Saturday
- Saturday Evening Banquet

MAKE REGISTRATION CHECK PAYABLE TO:

DAV Chapter 1 Convention Fund

MAIL REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK TO:

DAV Chapter 1 Convention Committee
1519 W 51st St, Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Name: _____

Chapter/Unit Number: _____

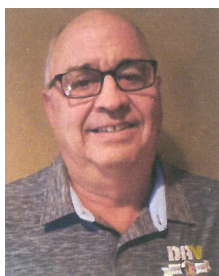
Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____



COMMANDER'S COLUMN

by Dan Francis

Hello Everyone! This will be my last post as your State Commander. I would like to thank everyone for your help during my year as your State Commander.

Back in February we attended the Mid-Winter conference in Washington DC.

There were seven members from the

Department of South Dakota. We were able to meet with Senators Thune and Rounds as well as Congressman Dusty Johnson. We had a very robust and conductive meeting with all 3 of them where we discussed DAV legislative goals and the effect they will have on Veterans and their benefits.

As you all know our State Convention is May 5-6 with a meet and greet on Thursday evening May 4th. CSO and DSO training will be conducted on the 3rd and the 4th of May. The training and the Convention will all take place at the Department Headquarters/Chapter 1 home in Sioux Falls. Be sure to bring your checkbook for the Auxillary auction on Friday night. There will also be discounted DAV shirts, sweaters and coats available for purchase.

During my term as your Commander we were able to get the Mitchell Chapter active once again. Chapter 27 is off to a great start and we all wish them well going forward. Just a friendly reminder that we do have the \$200 discount for lifetime membership in effect from March 15th until June 15th, 2023. This consists of a \$100 Chapter, \$100 Department match. New members only pay \$100 so lets get out there and sign up some new members. Don't forget to get out and sell some raffle tickets for the convention. Contact Department Headquarters if you are in need of additional books.

Again, I would like to thank all of you for your assistance this past year. I was honored to serve as your Department Commander this last year

— Commander Dan



AUXILIARY COMMANDER'S COLUMN

by Vincee Hanson

It's the middle of March and Spring is supposedly coming soon but that is hard to believe. Hopefully you all have weathered this winter well.

Before we know it, the DAV/DAVA Convention will be here. This year it will be May 5-6 in

Sioux Falls at the DAV Headquarters. Your Adj. should have all the reservation forms with all pertinent information. Please remember to sell your raffle tickets for the quilt as it is one of big moneymaker for our Auxillary. Make sure to have all your reports to State Adj Nancy before April 15th so she can do what she does wonderfully.

As my tenure as you State Commander comes to an end, I just want to say a big thank you. It has been an honor to serve you. I could not have done my job without my wonderful line people. I have great appreciation to each and every one of them and the job that they do. To the future Commander and her/his associates, I wish you the best in your tenure. Our DAVA is one of the greatest organizations that I have the honor to be associated with. We do a wonderful job in working to help and honor our veterans. Bless you all and hopefully we will see you in May.

WEST RIVER NEWS

by Dick D. Turnwall

Chapter 3 and Chapter 11 continue to meet and jointly do VA disability claims. With implementation of the PACT Act, the number of veterans coming in for claims assistance continues to grow. Our record for one day stands at 13 claims done by five of our CSOs.

CHAPTER 3 RAPID CITY

Open 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM each Monday through Friday to help veterans completed claims and answer questions.

Chapter 3 is hosting a Veteran's Standdown on Saturday, May 13, 2023 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Canyon Lake

Park Shelter #3 in Rapid City. There will be around 20 organizations present to assist veterans and includes activities for children. South Dakota Service Dogs is providing a free lunch for veterans, active duty and their families.

Chapter 3 is hosting a poker run on June 24, 2023. Registration begins at 9:00 AM with kick stands up at

10:00 AM. Dinner is being provided at 4:30 PM. The poker run begins and ends at Black Hills Harley Davidson.

NORTHERN HILLS CHAPTER 11

Fundraising and donations to help veterans continues to be a focus point for our Chapter. By the end of this quarter, Chapter 11 donations to organizations the help veterans will exceed \$40,000.00 since the start of our financial year.

To date, Chapter 11 has met membership goal and exceeded goal by five (5) new members. We have several more prospective members currently considering joining DAV.

Our Chapter meets at the American Legion in Piedmont since we don't own our own building. We schedule VA disability claims workshop on the third Saturday of each month rotating locations between American Legion, Piedmont; VFW Deadwood; VFW Spearfish and the Public Library, Sturgis. We're able to catch those veterans who may not be able to drive very far or they get a friend or neighbor to bring them to our location. Of course, at times a phone call will come in from a Veteran needing help between our scheduled dates and we'll find a way to meet them to help with their VA disability claim. With four (4) certified CSOs, we stay pretty busy.



DAV DEPT OF SD SR VICE COMMANDER'S COLUMN

by Christine Speirs

Happy Spring everyone! Great job recruiting! We have only 43 new members statewide to recruit before June 30th.

All of the Chapter Commanders have been e-mailed the "hot list" from our National office. This list is comprised of a list of names with contact information of those veterans who are eligible to become members. With our \$100 life membership, we should be able to make our quota. The \$100 life membership is just until June 15th, so let's get those new members!



Population Summary

Execution Date: 3/28/2023 12:15:59 PM

DCU No	DCU Name	Current Year						Goal		
		Goal Met	Total Trial	Total Part Life	Total Full Life	Total Paid Members	Total Members	Goal	Goal %	Goal Variance
40	Department of South Dakota		0	103	4,509	4,612	4,612	4,655	99.08%	-43
1	Arthur H Muchow #1	G	0	29	1,936	1,965	1,965	1,962	100.15%	3
3	Rapid City #3		0	31	1,228	1,259	1,259	1,270	99.13%	-11
4	Coyote State #4	G	0	25	60	85	85	85	100.00%	0
6	Watertown #6		0	3	174	177	177	184	96.20%	-7
11	Northern Hills #11	G	0	10	360	370	370	370	100.00%	0
13	Swanson O Connor #13		0	0	275	275	275	276	99.64%	-1
18	Oahe #18		0	3	216	219	219	227	96.48%	-8
19	Millbank-sisseton #19		0	2	88	90	90	97	92.78%	-7
22	Brookings #22		0	0	139	139	139	148	93.92%	-9
27	Davison County #27		0	0	33	33	33	36	91.67%	-3
Active		At Large	Merged	On Hold	Revoked	Suspended				
9		1	3	0	1	0				

2ND JR. VICE COMMANDER'S COLUMN

by Tim Walsh



Greetings DAV Department of South Dakota Members:

We have a new director, Sara Ackert, at the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System who started her duties the week of March 13th, 2023. She has been in Sioux Falls before and we are excited to have her back in charge of the Sioux Falls system. This is a welcomed change for those who utilize the Sioux Falls VA. VA hospitals across the nation are conducting PACT Act open houses trying

to reach out to eligible veterans and get them enrolled in VA care. Be sure to keep in contact with your local VAHCS to see when the next open house will be conducted. If you know of any vets that can benefit from this new legislation, be sure to get them in to see one of our Department or Chapter service officers.

Our 2023 Department of South Dakota Convention is right around the corner so be sure to register and plan on attending. We are looking forward to getting together with members from around the State and get updated on their local activities.

National Commander Joe issued DAV Policy goals for 2023 at DAV's Mid-Winter Conference in February. Our biggest push for this year is "Toxic Exposure". You can view his whole testimony on youtube. If you did not get to see it live, you need to check it out. He did an "AWESOME" job. We are going to see a lot of Veterans who need our help getting through the VA system.

That's it for now. We will see all of you in early May. Take care of yourself and one another.

—Tim

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM REPORT

by John Huntington

Hopefully this long cold winter will be coming to an end soon and we can have some decent weather for transporting Veterans to and from appointments.

In January 2023 we transported 121 Veterans 8692 miles and donated 493 volunteer hours; We did basically the same in February but hope that will improve with the weather. Hopefully we can get back to the pre Covid days in the near future.



John "Skip" Martin (left) and Darrel Simon with Madison's new van in 2022.

The Disabled American Veterans along with the Veterans Administration are working on a new project that we think will result in new volunteers; not only drivers but all the slots in the Veterans Hospital that need the extra help. Hope to have more details soon.

Madison has received a new van and by all accounts are very pleased with it. We also have a new one setting out front waiting for Lake Andes to pick up.

The new name for Voluntary Services is "VA Center for Development and Civic Engagement" Don't you just love it when they simplify something.

Stay well until next report.

—John Huntington DAV

SIoux FALLS VA HCS THE UPDATE

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023

****IMPORTANT NOTICES****



Sara S. Ackert, MHA, Director of the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System, was officially sworn in today! Director Ackert will spend her first few days of official duty at the VISN Executive Leadership Council in Eagan, MN. A huge THANK YOU to Dr. Pendergrass for his willingness to step up and provide invaluable Leadership in the interim.

PROUD MOMENT FOR THE SOUTH DAKOTA DAV DELEGATION AT OUR NATION'S CAPITOL

by Mark Wolf 1st Jr. Vice Commander

It was a great day for the Disabled American Veterans while visiting our nation's capital on Tuesday, 28 February 2023. This was nearly the last day for many members attending the DAV 2023 Mid-Winter Conference held just across the Potomac River in Arlington, VA.

This year's conference began Saturday, February 25TH, concluding late Tuesday, February 28TH for most attendees.

It was a great opportunity to put faces to names and both listen and speak with our national leadership. The conference included attending various workshops focusing on Local Veterans Assistance Program, Inspector General Workshop, Employment and Entrepreneurship and Communications Workshops. Throughout the conference discussion was about what we have done and what we can do going forward focusing on our 2023 Critical Policy goals. It was very informative.

This conference is one of the most memorable demonstrations of DAV's dedicated advocacy in action. Hundreds of nationwide DAV leaders joined together to discuss the most pressing important veteran's issues today and then bringing our battle directly to our elected leaders and officials in Washington, D.C.

On that Tuesday, conference members were encouraged to attend a Joint House and Senate VSO hearing called "Legislative Presentation of Disabled American Veterans." Here there was open conversation between the Veteran Affairs Committee members and the National DAV leadership. It is here where our National Commander, Joe Parsetich presented his testimony before the Veterans' Affairs committee members.

As formal introductions were exchanged, it never made me personally feel prouder to be a DAV member when I heard the kind, respectful words stated by both attending House and Senate members on what they had to say about the DAV organization, our leadership, our mission and how much they appreciate the DAV helping them do their jobs better helping veterans. They expounded how the DAV walks the talk in our mission statement representing veterans.

Presentation of DAV 2023 Legislative Program

The U.S. House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Committee holds 25 seats. Speaking on that day were:
Mike Bost (IL) Chairman Republican (Marine Corps Veteran)
Matt Rosendale (MT) Republican
Nikki Budzinski (IL) Democrat
Mark Takano (CA) Democrat Ranking Member

The U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Committee holds 19 seats. Speaking on that day were:
Jon Tester (MT) Chairman Democrat leadership roll
Patty Murray (WA) Democrat
Jerry Moran (KS) Ranking Member Republican leadership roll

Marsha Blackburn (TN) Republican
Maggie Hassan (NH) Democrat
Tommy Tuberville (AL) Republican
Angus King (ME) Democrat
John Boozman (AR) Republican



U.S. Committee on Veterans' Affairs Committee L to R front Jerry Moran (KS), Mike Bost (IL), Jon Tester (MT), Mark Takano (CA), Chris Deluzio (PA), Delia Ramirez (IL)

Mike Bost (IL) Chairman speaker introduced himself. In respectful kind words he stated:

It's a deep honor. It is about you and the millions of veterans and voices you represent across this country are brothers and sisters in arms. You understand the struggles veterans and their families face. You know, where VA is falling short. DAV has made a tremendous difference. We thank you for that. You have my commitment that we will fight for you and the voices of the representatives, just as hard as you fought for us.

Mark Takano (CA) Democrat Ranking Member. A formal introduction was made stated:

Along with the support of the Biden / Harris Administration, we will be able to achieve these goals and fulfill the sacred promises. I look forward to hearing your testimony today and thank you for your continued advocacy, and support for the veteran's community. Thank you.

Jerry Moran (KS) Ranking Member Republican leadership delivered very thoughtful words:

We couldn't have gotten The PACT Act done without you and other VSO partners. We thank you for your work on behalf of this disabled veterans, but we thank your membership. For the sacrifices that they've given to this country and they have been great. I want to thank you, your service and your tireless commitment to the military and veterans' community.

National Commander Joseph Parsetich presented DAV's legislative priorities for the 118th Congress before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees. National Commander Joseph Parsetich stated:
Thank you for providing me the opportunity to deliver to 2023 legislative program of DAV Disabled American Veterans, an organization of more than 1 million members, all of whom were injured or became ill as a result of wartime service.

My written statement thoroughly details DAV key legislative

priorities for the 118th Congress and reports on our many programs and accomplishments. So today, I'm just going to highlight some of our more critical policy goals. I'd like to start off by introducing my DAV colleagues joining me here today.



Above, L to R, DAV speakers noted with bullet

- Executive Director, Washington Headquarters Randy Reese
- National Commander Joe Parsetich
- National Adjutant, CEO, and Secretary Marc Burgess
- National Executive Director National Headquarters, Berry Jesinoski
- National Voluntary Services Director, John Kleindienst

Commander Parsetich went on to address pressing issues impacting our nation's veterans, including:

- Correcting inequities in compensation benefits for veterans and survivors
- Implementing the PACT Act and addressing gaps in toxic exposure benefits
- Ensuring equity in VA care, services and benefits for women, LGBTQ+ and minority veterans
- Providing a full spectrum of long-term care options for service-disabled and aging veterans
- Bolstering mental health resources to ensure continued progress in reducing veteran suicide
- Expanding the VA's capacity to deliver timely, high-quality health care to veterans

To view the recording of the entire hearing, including questions and answers, Google, <https://www.veterans.senate.gov/2023/2/legislative-presentation-of-disabled-american-veterans>

The day was not over for us after this historic morning event. We proceeded to bring the DAV message to our South Dakota lawmakers. We were fortunate to be able to visit our SD Representative Dustin M. Johnson, Jr. Senator Mike Rounds and Sr. Senator John Thune at their offices.

These offices were located all around Capitol Hill. We were very fortunate they were willing to make time for the South Dakota DAV for a face-to-face brief meeting to make our point clear. What DAV is fighting for. As DAV members we needed to ensure our policymakers in Washington heard our voices speaking on behalf of America's ill and injured veterans and their families. The South Dakota representatives making up the delegation to visit with our law makers was:

- Dan Francis, from Sioux Falls Chapter 1, SD DAV DEPT COMMANDER
- Christine Speirs from Rapid City Chapter 3, SD DAV DEPT

SR. VICE COMMANDER

- Mark Wolf from Aberdeen, Chapter 13, SD DAV DEPT 1st JR. VICE COMMANDER
- Tim Walsh from Sioux Falls Chapter 1, SD DAV DEPT 2ND JR. VICE COMMANDER
- Marty Pennock from Sioux Falls Chapter 1, SD DAV DEPT ADJUTANT
- Robert Hill from Brookings Chapter 22, SD DAV DEPT JUDGE ADVOCATE / INSPECTOR
- Kim K. Hubers from Sioux Falls Chapter 1, ARTHUR MUCHOW SR. VICE COMMANDER

Our plan was scheduled to visit and introduce ourselves and we each presented one of our 2023 DAV's Critical Policy Goals to our policy makers. (As listed earlier and seen in our January Bulletin).



We were very fortunate these three leaders took the time from their busy schedules for our SD DAV delegation to visit them. It was a very humbling experience being inside the United States Capitol Building, the symbol of our government. Just thinking about the history and who was inside those walls was a humbling experience. If those walls could speak.



VETERANS MOVING AHEAD THROUGH MEANINGFUL WORK

by Lynne Hunter, MSW, CSW-PIP, QMHP2

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program is among the many Departments of Veterans Affairs' (VA) initiatives in support of Veterans experiencing mental health, substance use, physical challenges, and homelessness.

The VA vocational rehabilitation program strives to match and support Veterans in competitive jobs, and to consult with businesses and industries regarding their specific employment needs. It is a recovery-



oriented, vocational service that involves many models of treatment. Transitional Work (TW) and Supported Employment (SE) are available through the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System. Vocational Rehabilitation Programs provide work experiences or employment opportunities in the community or VA medical facilities that provide vocational and clinical services to enable participants to gain work experience and work resilience to prepare for community-based competitive employment. The core philosophy of Vocational Rehabilitation is that all persons with a disability can contribute productively to the workforce given the right supports, and no one should be excluded from the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution.

Work is integral to our well-being and contributes to our defining ourselves. Income from work does more than sustain us. It provides meaningful activity; a way to be productive and useful. Vocational Rehabilitation clinical services are most effective when staff is integrated with the Veterans' interdisciplinary treatment team. Vocational rehabilitation staff coordinates employment services with other VA, federal, state, and local community partners. Services are outcome-oriented resulting in meaningful community-based competitive employment and evidence-based and evidence-informed employment practices are prioritized.

Approximately 800 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists, Managers, and Peer Support Specialists provided vocational rehabilitation support services across the VA hospital system and work with Veterans every day to achieve and retain meaningful work. Over 52,000 Veterans are served through the Vocational Rehabilitation program each year. Through the program, Veterans are provided opportunities for social interactions, connecting Veterans with Veterans and communities, and increasing a sense of belonging, purpose, and accomplishment. The goal is to support Veterans to achieve and maintain permanent, community employment.

For more information about the Sioux Falls VA's Vocational Rehabilitation Program, call 605-336-3230 ext. 5508 or visit <https://www.va.gov/health/cwt/>

There are two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist to support Veterans of the Sioux Falls VA.

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER SUPERVISOR REPORT

by Owen Richards



The DAV NSO Office would like to take a moment to share some upcoming events within our state that we are hosting.

First off are the information seminars that we have for the west side of the state; starting on June 20th in Deadwood it will be held at the VFW. Next stop will be in Rapid

City at the American Legion on 21st of June, and the lastly for the west side is Hill City at the Hill City Event Center on the 22nd of June.

Next, is the east side of the state; starting with Brookings the 10th of July, it will be at the American Legion, then I stop in Mitchell at the VFW on the 2nd Floor on July 12th, and then lastly is Aberdeen on July 13th at the Dakota Events Center.

You might notice a day in between Brookings and Mitchell's information seminar stops, that is due to the VHA/VBA Hosting a PACT ACT Clinic in Watertown at the VA CBOC from 3pm until 6pm on July 11th, so please come join us as we work alongside them for this event.

Also, I look forward to seeing everyone at either one of the CSO-DSO Level I or II training classes this year. Those as a reminder are as follows, the east side will be in conjunction with the Annual State Convention on the 3rd (Level I) and 4th (Level II) of May. The west side of the state this year's classes for anyone who needs to attend will be the 8th (Level I) and 9th (Level II) of June.



VETERANS TOWN HALL MEETING



CALLING ALL VETERANS

2:30 P.M. FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2023
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS HEADQUARTERS
1519 W. 51ST STREET, SIOUX FALLS, SD 57105

ALL VETERANS ARE INVITED

SOUTH DAKOTA CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS FROM SENATOR JOHN THUNE; SENATOR MICHAEL ROUNDS; AND REPRESENTATIVE DUSTY JOHNSON

AND
NETWORK DIRECTOR (VISN 23) ROBERT MCDIVITT; MEDICAL CENTER DIRECTOR SARA ACKERT (VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM SIOUX FALLS); MEDICAL CENTER DIRECTOR LISA CURNES (VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FORT MEADE/HOT SPRINGS); DAKOTA REGIONAL DIRECTOR SHAWN BOHN; SECRETARY GREG WHITLOCK WITH THE SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS; AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR DIRECTOR SARA BIERMAN

WILL BE AVAILABLE TO FIELD QUESTIONS ON:

- *VA Health Care
- *G.I. Bill
- *Employment
- *VA Budget FY 2024 & 2025
- *Health Care Enrollment
- *Homeless
- *VA Benefits
- *Choice Program
- *PTSD & TBI
- *FACT Act

VOICE YOUR OPINIONS AND CONCERNS



YOU ARE INVITED



SARA ACKERT **Medical Center Director for VA** **Sioux Falls Health Care System**

Effective March 12, 2023, Ms. Sara Ackert took the role as the Medical Center Director for VA Sioux Falls Health Care System, VISN 23. Ms. Ackert was the Associate Director of Resources and Operations for VA Central Iowa Health Care System. She

holds a Master of Healthcare Administration from Des Moines University and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing with emphasis in psychology from Grandview College. She is a graduate of the VHA Executive Career Field (ECF) Leadership Development Program and is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). Ms. Ackert has been with the Department of Veterans Affairs for over 33 years and has proven success in health care operations.

LAWMAKERS FURIOUS OVER MISPELT NAMES **ON KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL**

House and Senate lawmakers are demanding answers on how hundreds of service members' names were misspelled or mixed-up on stone markers at the Korean War Veterans Memorial despite warnings from advocates about the potential for mistakes years ago.

“Errors of this magnitude should not have made it past the initial blueprints, much less carved into stone, and certainly not erected and unveiled to the public,” a bipartisan group of key congressional leaders wrote in a March 3 letter to Defense Department leaders.

In spring 2021, ahead of plans to unveil a new remembrance wall at the memorial featuring the names of more than 36,000 Americans who died in support of the war, members of the Korean War Project warned of numerous discrepancies in the National Archives and Records Administration list officials planned to use to complete the project.

HOW VA'S BIGGEST BUDGET EVER WILL IMPACT VETERANS

Last year, Congress sent several DAV-championed bills to the president's desk, including the historic expansion of benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances. But another sizeable legislative package enacted in December includes dozens of other provisions that will touch the lives of veterans nationwide.

The \$1.7 trillion omnibus bill, which will fund the federal government through September, increases the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) budget to over \$303 billion, the agency's highest ever.

“It's our responsibility to take care of the men and women in uniform who took care of us in protecting this country—and that starts by ensuring access to the care and benefits they've earned with this bipartisan package,” said Sen. Jon Tester of Montana, chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. “I'm proud the Senate came together to pass a full-year funding bill that'll help us make good on that promise, including to our toxic-exposed veterans.”

Part of the increase in VA funding reflects an uptick in veterans' demand for claims and services under the Honoring our PACT Act, which expanded VA health care and benefits to millions of veterans. Within VA's new budget, \$119 billion is set aside for medical care, a 22% increase over fiscal year 2022 levels. It also dedicates nearly \$4 billion to administer benefits, including compensation, and \$5 billion solely for implementing the PACT Act.

However, that's not all there is for veterans.

The more than 4,000-page bill also includes more than 60 other DAV-supported provisions to further strengthen VA health care and veterans benefits.

Veterans whose clothing has been damaged by a prosthesis, skin medication or orthopedic device—including wheelchairs—are eligible for a clothing allowance. But they were needlessly burdened by an annual application process, even for those requiring such equipment for the rest of their lives.

This provision cuts the red tape by allowing VA to provide these payments on a recurring and automatic annual basis.

It also makes the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program permanent, providing employment and job training for homeless veterans, expanding Vet Center eligibility for mental health services, and setting money aside to study suicide prevention efforts and research traumatic brain injury and PTSD in post-9/11 veterans.

For a more comprehensive list of veterans provisions included in the omnibus and other legislation enacted in 2022 during the second session of the 117th Congress, check out DAV's Victories for Veterans at dav.la/3b6.



“We're heartened to see so many DAV's priorities make it into this final bipartisan funding package,” said DAV National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. “And a properly funded VA is crucial to providing our veterans the service and benefits they've earned. As a new Congress settles in, I encourage all DAV members to join the Commander's Action Network to stay on top of issues and take action on vital legislation.”

Find updates to other major veteran legislation by joining DAV CAN (Commander's Action Network) at DAVCAN.org.

★ ★ ★ ★ 2023 SOUTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE ACTION ★ ★ ★ ★

SB 13 authorize the construction of an addition to the BG Dean Mann Readiness Center in Sioux Falls, to make an appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency - **passed Senate & House, signed by Governor**

SB 15 accept Uniformed Services ID as proof of veteran status to have veteran designation added to a state license or ID card - **passed Senate & House, signed by Governor**

SB 127 revise the eligible disability level for veterans to receive state park benefits- **defeated - deferred to 41st day**

SB 186 provide free tuition for a resident whose parent died while on active duty in the United States armed forces- **tabled at the request of sponsor**

SB 190 designate a portion of U.S. Highway 83 as Sicangu Lakota Code Talker Highway- **defeated - deferred to 41st day**

SB 196 provide for the study of long-term care services and to provide an appropriation therefor- **Senate tabled (34-0)**

SC 801 Honoring the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Singing Legionnaires of American Legion Post 15 in Sioux Falls. - **Passed**

SC 809 Commending and honoring those members of the United States Armed Forces who have been stationed in South Korea on the seventieth anniversary of the armistice which ended the fighting. - **Passed**

HB 1037 amend the eligibility for admission to the state veterans' home and repeal the residency requirement. - **defeated - deferred to 41st day**

HB 1038 revise certain provisions pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs and residency in the State Veterans Home. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1039 revise certain provisions regarding the payment of tuition for members of the South Dakota National Guard. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1045 increase the basic salary schedule for county veterans' service officers. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1046 provide free tuition at Board of Technical Education institutions for children or spouses of members of the South Dakota National Guard disabled or deceased in the line of duty. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1051 require counties to hire veteran service officers in proportion to the number of veterans residing in the county. **defeated - deferred to 41st day**

HB 1052 change the eligibility requirements of a property tax relief program for disabled veterans and surviving spouses. **defeated - deferred to 41st day**

HB 1054 provide a stipend for the erection of a private headstone for a deceased veteran. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1065 increase the maximum amount of dollars payable by the state to erect the headstone of a deceased veteran. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HB 1190 make an appropriation to provide a grant for the construction of a military heritage museum in Sioux Falls and declare an emergency. **tabled in joint committee on appropriation (15-3)**

HC 1196 make an appropriation for improving the buildings and grounds of the capitol complex and declare an emergency. **passed House & Senate, signed by Governor**

HCR 8001 make an appropriation for improving thHonoring E. Royce Williams for his life, achievement, and heroism as he is awarded the Navy Cross. **passed**

HB 6003 Encouraging the Executive Board of the Legislature to authorize the interim legislative study of long-term care services for veterans regardless of disability ratings and to develop long-term care plans for VA-operated purchased and subsidized long-term care services. **defeated - deferred to 41st day The state of South Dakota will do a summer study on their issue**



SFVAHCS Director Sara Ackert addresses Veterans concerns at the Department Headquarters on March 29th, Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Day.

BILLS ON THE HILL WASHINGTON D.C.

H.R.411, the Lead by Example Act of 2023

Would require that members of Congress and congressional staff receive health care from the VA, rather than through current plans.

S. 302, the Barbosa Act Ensures that service members exposed to toxins will have the vital screenings to identify cancer while still on active duty.

H.R. 1529/S.777 Veterans Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2023

Increases VA Compensation benefits rates for veterans and those in receipt of Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

S. 132 The Daniel J. Harvey Jr. and Adam Lambert Improving Service Member Transition to reduce Veteran Suicide Act.

this bill would create a pilot project coordinated by VA and the Department of Defense to educate transitioning service members about challenges and risks of separating from service.

SDDVA 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

SDDVA's Annual Report has been completed and has been provided to the legislators as required by statute. The 2022 annual report highlights the outstanding accomplishments of our superb team of dedicated professionals and the unmatched support we receive from our county, tribal, state and federal partners and all of our veterans service organizations and their members. This report demonstrates our commitment to ensuring South Dakota remains the most veteran-friendly state in the nation. It can be viewed on the SDDVA website at: <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/publicaffairs/Other%20Publications/2022%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.



THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET 2024

The Department of Veterans Affairs must fill tens of thousands of health care and support positions, faithfully implement the largest expansion of veterans benefits ever and work with Congress to develop a new infrastructure strategy, according to The Independent Budget Veterans Agenda for the 118th Congress.

For more than three decades, the Independent Budget (IB) partners—DAV, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Paralyzed Veterans of America—have offered

crucial fiscal recommendations for the VA so the agency charged with caring for our nation's veterans can meet current and evolving needs.

The group released the annual report in February, providing an impartial picture of the budgetary requirements across five critical issue areas.

“After almost three years of the pandemic, it appears that COVID may be nearing its endemic stage, and one result could be greater predictability of VA's funding needs,” the IB partners wrote.

For fiscal year (FY) 2024, the IB partners recommend \$139.9 billion in total medical care and \$157.2 billion for FY 2025 advance appropriations. This recommendation “reflects the increased funding baseline for all medical care programs established over the past two years, continuing enrollment increases, higher inflation, a federal pay raise and rising workloads,” the report states.

Medical job vacancies have plagued health care systems nationwide. And as the nation's most extensive integrated health care apparatus, the VA has staffing issues that match those of the greater workforce. A 2022 VA staffing report said the department had more than 76,000 openings—double the number of vacancies from the previous year.

For FY 2024, the IB partners recommend that the VA “pursue an aggressive hiring trend” by filling 19,200 full-time employee positions, at a cost of about \$2.8 billion.

When the Honoring our PACT Act became law last year, it ushered in a new era for veterans exposed to toxic substances. The Independent Budget states that the law will require flexibility as it greatly expands VA health care eligibility.

“While it is too soon to assess how many veterans will apply under the PACT Act and what the resource requirement will be in the next few years, [the] VA and Congress must monitor enrollment and application trends closely and make any necessary adjustments to funding before and during FY 2024,” according to the report.

Congress scrapped the VA's Asset and Infrastructure Review last year, rejecting a plan to close or overhaul medical facilities that do not meet veterans' health care needs. The commission was mandated by the 2018 MISSION Act, a bill to give veterans more medical care options.

The IB partners recommend that Congress and the VA reengage on infrastructure and develop a new strategy to build, repair and realign VA assets and properties. With a rapidly aging veteran population, that plan should also aim to meet the specialized long-term care needs of veterans, including those with spinal cord injuries.

“This Congress will be responsible for equipping [the] VA to provide the benefits and services veterans earned and at the quality they deserve,” said DAV National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. “The Independent Budget is a critical guide for lawmakers who will consider many important issues directly impacting veterans' lives.”

DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH DAKOTA 83rd ANNUAL DEPARTMENT STATE CONVENTION AGENDA

WEDNESDAY – MAY 3, 2023

8:00 a.m. Chapter & Dept Service Officer Training - Level 1
NSO Owen Richards, *DAV Headquarters*

THURSDAY – MAY 4, 2023

8:00 a.m. Chapter & Dept Service Officer Training - Level 2
NSO Owen Richards, *DAV Headquarters*
4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Registration – *DAV Headquarters*
4:00 p.m. Committee Meetings – *DAV Headquarters Available*
5:00 p.m. Commander’s Reception & Pizza – *DAV Headquarters*

FRIDAY – MAY 5, 2023

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Registration
8:00 a.m. DAV Department of South Dakota Service and
Transportation
(Income Research Committee) – Chairperson Dick
Turnwall
9:00 a.m. DAV Department Executive Committee (DEC)
10:00 a.m. Break
10:15 a.m. First Business Session
11:30 a.m. Auxiliary and DAV Forget-Me-Not Luncheon
1:00 p.m. Joint Opening Session
Call to Order – Commander Dan Francis Wall
Presentation of Honor To Our Flag –
Invocation – Chaplain Gaylord Helmbrecht Pledge of Allegiance
– DAVA
Americanism Officer – Verna Messerschmidt
Department Commander Reports
DAV Commander Dan Francis
DAV Auxiliary Commander Vinceen Hanson
Introduction of Guests
DAV Commander Dan Francis
DAV Auxiliary Commander Vinceen Hanson
2:30 p.m. Veterans Town Hall Meeting – Moderator Tim Walsh
4:00 p.m. Committee Meetings – *DAV Headquarters Available*
6:00 p.m. Evening Meal
7:00 p.m. DAV Auxiliary Auction

SATURDAY – MAY 6, 2023

8:00 a.m. Registration
8:30 a.m. Memorial Service
9:45 a.m. Final Business Session
10:45 a.m. Break
12:00 p.m. Awards Luncheon for DAV and Auxiliary
1:30 p.m. Final Business Session
Election of Officers for 2023 - 2024

ADJOURNMENT

2:30 p.m. Post DEC meeting - Commander’s Discretion
3:30 p.m. Income Research Committee – Chair Dick Turnwall
5:30 p.m. Social Hour
6:00 p.m. Commander’s Banquet
Installation of Newly Elected Officers



Member Mark Wolf shown with the prestigious 2023 Outstanding Achievement Award for Civilian Advocate for Military and/or Veteran Groups.

MARK WOLF 1ST JR. VICE COMMANDER RECEIVES AWARD

On February 14, 2023 DAV member Mark Wolf was recognized for his advocacy in helping veterans.

Mark Wolf was nominated for the prestigious, “Civilian Advocate for Military and/or Veteran Group Award”. The chamber award presenter, Jeff Everson read the nominator’s quote: “When considering who in the community best exemplified the meaning of Civilian Advocate for Military and Veterans groups one name comes to mind – Mark Wolf. He demonstrates those skills worthy

of this honor, giving his time and talent back to the community... He tirelessly puts veterans needs ahead of his own to assist them and represents area veterans with benefit issues. He is known as the go-to veteran for assistance or answers to veterans’ questions or needs.”

2023 DAV SD CONVENTION RAFFLE

The DAV Headquarters in South Dakota have received the following for the 2023 DAV South Dakota Convention Raffle:

- \$1,000 DAV AHM Ch No. 1
- \$3,000 DAV Rapid City Ch No. 3
- \$100 DAV Watertown Ch No. 6
- \$1,000 DAV Northern Hills Ch No. 11
- \$200 DAV Swanson – O’Connor Ch No. 13
- \$50 DAV Pierre Oahe Ch No. 18
- \$500 DAV Milbank-Sisseton Ch No. 19
- \$100 DAV Brookings Chapter No. 22
- \$250 DAV Davison County Ch No. 27
- \$100 Korean War Display, LLC
- \$100 Gene Murphy
- \$100 Dick Turnwall
- Vietnam Vets: Still Coming Home Book
AHM Ch No. 1
- Box with Wine, Glasses, Cutting Boards,
Cheese, Cracker Gene Murphy
- Handmade Wooden American Flag
Dan Francis

The DAV still invites Chapters, Auxiliary Units, members, businesses, and corporations to donate prizes for the 2023 DAV Convention Raffle Project. Please contact the DAV Headquarters in Sioux Falls, to let us know what is being donated.

Thank you for your assistance towards the DAV Department of South Dakota Service Programs and Hospital Transportation Network. These programs assist our members and Chapters in South Dakota.

911 DAV VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED!

by Jack C Post II

DAV Dept of SD, DSO/Transportation Coordinator

The need for volunteer drivers increases everyday. Recruiting more requires the participation of the entire South Dakota DAV membership.

THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE A DRIVER ARE:

Desire to serve fellow veterans and their families, acceptable driving record, proof of current personal auto insurance, pass VA background check (which includes fingerprinting), pass DOT-like physical by VA employee health physician, COVID Vax and current flu shot

NON REQUIREMENTS:

Being a veteran, using personal vehicle, driving when you believe weather is too hazardous, volunteering a minimum number of hours every month.

EFFECTIVE RECRUITING METHODS

TV and radio community bulletin boards, announcements, TV news segments spotlighting the DAV, newspaper articles focused on the DAV, booths @ community events, job fairs, outdoor recreation equipment shows, boat shows, arts, crafts and home expo shows, announcements @ sporting

events, veteran stand down events, going to VFW, American Legion and other organizations regular meetings, recruiting posters throughout communities

The poster at left was created by Earl MacArthur, a long serving DAV driver. DAV National tweaked it and Chapters 3 and 11 paid to have



a couple dozen 2 ft x 3 ft copies printed. Ft Meade leadership thought so highly of them that over a dozen were framed, encased and displayed in many BHHCS facilities.

You may not need rides to appointments now. However, you may unexpectedly at some time "AS LIFE HAPPENS!!!"

WILL THERE BE ENOUGH WHEN YOU NEED A RIDE?

Many Many veterans rely solely on The DAV Transportation Network. The more drivers we have the more veterans we can FULFILL AMERICA'S PROMISE TO!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2023

- 4th Tuesday 3-5 PM OPEN HOUSE New VA Mental Health Building
- 6th Thursday ARMY DAY
- 7th Friday GOOD FRIDAY
- 9th Sunday National Former POW Recognition Day
- 9th Sunday "HAPPY EASTER"
- 12th Wednesday 10AM VA Sioux Falls Stakeholders Meeting
- 14th Friday DAV Convention Delegate & Deceased Listing to DAV Headquarters & DAV Convention Booklet Advertisement
- 17th Monday DAV Convention Chairpersons & Department Officers Reports to DAV Headquarters
- 19th Wednesday South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting MJFSVH-Hot Springs - 3 PM
- 20th Thursday 7:00 PM Sioux Falls Veterans Council Meeting SDMHA
- 21st-23rd Friday/Saturday/Sunday Vietnam Veterans Reunion - Rapid City

MAY 2023

- 3rd Wednesday . . . DAV Department/Chapter Service Officers Training Sioux Falls
- 4th Thursday . . . DAV Department/Chapter Service Officers Training Sioux Falls
- 4th Thursday Commanders Reception 5-8pm DAV Headquarters
- 5th-6th Friday/Saturday DAV & AUXILLARY STATE CONVENTION DAV HEADQUARTERS SIOUX FALLS
- 8th Monday Victory in Europe Day - 1945
- 10th Wednesday 10AM VA Sioux Falls Stakeholders Meeting
- 12th Friday Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 13th Saturday 10AM-3:00PM DAV STANDOWN CANYON LAKE PARK PICNIC SHELTER RAPID CITY
- 14th Sunday HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY
- 20th Saturday COMMANDER JOE PARSETICH TESTIMONIAL DINNER HILTON GARDEN INN, KALISPELL, MT
- 20th Saturday ARMED FORCES DAY CEREMONY 10AM ALLIANCE
- 25th-26th Thursday/Friday 20th Annual PVA North Central Chaper/SD Fire Fighter Walleye Event
- 28th Sunday DAV Host VA Patients Pizza Party, SFVAHCS, 2 North
- 29th Monday MEMORIAL DAY
- 29th Monday . . . 8:30AM SDDVA Memorial Service Program, SD State Cemetery
- 29 Monday 10AM Sioux Falls Veterans Council Memorial Service, Alliance

JUNE 2023

- 2nd-4th Friday/Saturday/Sunday DAV WOMEN VETERANS RETREAT, ABBEY OF THE HILLS, MARTIN SD
- 8th Thursday . . . DAV Department/Chapter Service Officers Training, Rapid City
- 9th Friday DAV Department/Chapter Service Officers Training, Rapid City
- 14th Wednesday 10AM VA SIOUX FALLS STAKEHOLDERS MEETING
- 14th Wednesday FLAG DAY AND US ARMY FOUNDING/BIRTHDAY.
- 18th Sunday HAPPY FATHERS DAY
- 19th Monday JUNETEENTH "OFFICE CLOSED"
- 20th Tuesday DAV Information Seminars, Deadwood - VFW
- 21st Wednesday . . . DAV Information Seminars, Rapid City - American Legion
- 22nd Thursday DAV Information Seminars, Hill City - Event Center
- 24th Friday DAV Rapid City Chapter Poker Run 9AM



WE WANT YOU INVOLVED IN THE DAV PROGRAMS IN 2023!

DAV NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER

OWEN RICHARDS

EMAIL: dav.vbasux@va.gov

VA REGIONAL OFFICE

2501 W 22nd • VARO 101

Sioux Falls, SD 57117

Phone: 605.333.6896

CHAPTER MEETINGS

Sioux Falls - DAV Club

5:30pm, 2nd Tuesday

1519 W 51st St, Sioux Falls

Rapid City - DAV Club

7:30pm 2nd Wednesday

101 E Madison St, Rapid City

Watertown - American Legion

7:15pm 2nd Monday

1412 9th Ave SW, Watertown

Piedmont - American Legion

7pm 2nd Thursday

101 Pine St, Piedmont

Aberdeen

Plymouth Congressional Church

7pm 2nd Tuesday

431 W Melgaard Road, Aberdeen

Pierre - American Legion

7pm 3rd Tuesday

520 S Pierre Street, Pierre

Milbank-Sisseton

10:30am 1st Saturday

Pizza Ranch, Milbank

Brookings - American Legion

7pm 2nd Tuesday

1229 Western Ave, Brookings

Mitchell - VFW

7:30pm Last Tuesday

215 N. Main St., Mitchell

DONATIONS TO SERVICE AND LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS

by Dick Turnwall, Chairman of Income Research Committee

As your Department Chairman of Income Research Committee, I ask you to consider a donation to the DAV Department Service and Legislative Programs of your first month's COLA increase. This year 2023 the Cost-of-Living Adjustment was 8.7% beginning January 1, 2023. All the donated funds will be used for assisting the Services for Veterans and Legislative Support for our Veterans. In FY 2022 we received donations of \$3,885.67 from 17 members from their first month's compensation check. Chairman Turnwall invites ALL MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE. Your support would be very appreciated by the Disabled American Veterans of South Dakota. THANK YOU for your commitment and support.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

CHAPTER #: _____

AMOUNT OF DONATION \$ _____

Send all remittance payable to:
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
1519 W 51st Street
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57105

THANK YOU!

BULLETIN SCHEDULE

APRIL: Submittal Deadline:

March 10th

JULY: Submittal Deadline:

June 10th

OCTOBER: Submittal Deadline:

September 10th

JANUARY: Submittal Deadline:

December 10th

Email all reports to:

admin@davsd.org

BULLETIN BOOSTER ADVERTISEMENT PROGRAM FY 2022-2023

The Department Bulletin will be published four times this fiscal year (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023). We would like to invite all DAV Members, Auxiliary Members, Chapters, Units and businesses to sign up as a Bulletin Booster Advertiser. Your name will be published in each issue for only a \$20 donation.

Please help defray the costs of publishing by contributing to the BULLETIN BOOSTER ADVERTISEMENT PROGRAM.

BULLETIN BOOSTERS THANK YOU!

Chapter No. 1 Sioux Falls

Sioux Falls Chapter No. 1 (\$1,000)

Dan Francis

John Huntington

Jessie Kaciuba (\$50)

Jerry Kerkhove

Gene Murphy (\$120)

Helen Parr

Ronnie Simonsen

Dave Van Dine (\$40)

Tim Walsh (\$125)

Chapter No. 3 Rapid City

(\$500)

H.G. Krosschell (\$100)

Chapter No. 6 Watertown

Don Barrow (\$100)

Chapter No. 11 Northern Hills

(\$500)

Chapter No. 13 Aberdeen

Swanson-O'Connor No. 13 (\$275)

Mark Wolf

Chapter No. 18 Pierre

Auxiliary Oahe Unit No. 18

Chapter No. 19 Milbank/Sisseton

(\$100)

Chapter No. 22 Brookings

Paul Hanson

Robert and Kilsuk Hill (\$50)