



Vietnam Veterans of America of Northeast South Dakota

(Vietnam and Vietnam Era Veterans)

Chapter 1054

605-956-8820

PO Box 1062, Watertown, SD 57201

Meetings held on the 3rd Thursday of each month:

7 pm at the Elk's Lodge, 300 West Kemp St., Watertown, SD

Email: vets@NESDVVA.org

Website: www.NESDVVA.org

Sept/Oct 2024



Commander's Corner,

Well, with the sun going down earlier every day that only means that fall is coming. I hope all of you enjoyed the summer. We had a great turnout for the picnic and we hope everybody enjoyed the food and friendship. I

would like to thank Dennis Solberg, Jim Hanson and Brian DeBoer for heading up this year's picnic.

We as a board, would like to see more volunteers for these events and other projects, so please don't be afraid to come up and ask any of the board members if you can help and have any ideas on what we can do to benefit Chapter 1054.

The State Fair is coming up and we will be manning a table at the DAV building. Come in and say Hi to us and all the other vets organization.

School is starting and we will be going out with our video and troops to show the students what we did during the war. We like to have one member from each of the branches, so if you would like to share a part of your story, let us know. It is interesting to see the interest the kid's have. After all most of them were not even born when we were over there.

Starting at our September meeting, we are going to offer a free meal for all the VVA and AVVA members. It will start at 6:00 pm and go until the meeting starts at 7 pm. The meal is no cost to the members. It will not be order off the menu, just a special for us at each meeting. Hope to see more of you come and join us.

Hope you have a great rest of the summer.

President
Jerry Denman

Phil Braeger Honored with the Atomic Veterans Award



Senator Mike Rounds recently present Phil Braeger with the Atomic Veterans Medal and certificate for participating in the 1962 above ground nuclear tests in Yucca Flats Nevada.

VVA Board of Directors:

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Notes from Todd Rose

(Veterans Service Officer for Codington & Hamlin County)

Things are busy here at the Veterans Service Office and for the US Veterans Affairs. In 2023 alone the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) completely more than 1.9 million disability compensation and pension claims for Veterans, an all time VA record that broke the previous year's record by 15.9%. On March 4, 2024 the VBA announced that it has processed its one millionth veteran benefits claim for fiscal year 2024.

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This was the earliest in VA history and nearly six weeks faster than the previous record (from fiscal record year 2023).

The recent bill "Honor the Pact Act" signed into law on Aug 10 2022 has created a surge in claims and new veterans entering VA health care. This impacts and effects the whole VA system not just claims. So please be patient and try to plan when working with the VA. Things are taking longer to be completed and longer to get scheduled. Please do your best to make your scheduled appointments/events or to call ahead if you can't so that time might be dedicated to someone else.

Please keep in mind if you are working with a VSO to complete a claim and you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact them. If you get letters asking about your claim please contact your VSO before responding to them. If you get letters concerning your VA healthcare or VA billing/copays, please pay attention to the 800 number listed on the letter and contact that number first to resolve the issue or if you have questions about the letter. VSO's have no visibility of VA healthcare, billing or copays.

K-Award- we have found that there are several veterans that are not aware they are receiving Special Monthly Compensation (SMC K-Award). This is for the loss of the use of a creative organ and would have been filed or determined during a VA claim for disability. Veteran would have been notified on their rating narrative decision. The SMC K-Award is not added to the summary of benefits letter that veterans get yearly from the VA, To get a copy you need to log into your Ebenefits to download, you can call 800-827-1000 to request a summary of benefits letter and have them include the SMC K-Award if you are in receipt of it or contact your local VSO and work with them to get a copy. There are two South Dakota state benefits you are eligible for with K-Award: disable veterans' plate (2sets) that you can get at your county treasurer and state park entrance sticker with reduced camping fees at state parks that you have to send application to the SDGFP in Pierre. Please don't go and contact them without first getting a Summary of Benefits letter stating that you are a recipient of a K-Award. They cannot get the letter or assist you without it.

The Veteran's Service Officer provides expert claims service to every eligible Codington & Hamlin Veterans and his/her dependants and survivors: to aid the veteran in understanding entitlements, which can minimize the burden of health and economic stress; to process the necessary forms for Federal as well as State Veteran Benefits.

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Address Changes.....

If you have recently moved could you please drop us a note with your new address...either to k_solberg@yahoo.com or VVA Newsletter PO Box 1062, Watertown, SD 57201

Agent Orange Medals awarded to Vietnam Veterans in NE S Dakota.



Bobby Tinner, from North Carolina presented members with the Agent Orange Metal. This is awarded to Vietnam Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange chemicals during Military service. To qualify Veterans need a documented medical condition attributed to their service in Vietnam. The medals are presented free of charge.



Pictured here are Mike Meyer, James Elkins, Ed Timm, Gordon Van Sickle Rose Haug (sister to Curtis Peterson) and Clifford Knox.



Robert Grover, Jay Trepanier, Clayton Ellingson, Lori Halajian, (for her brother James Coleman) and Connie Horner Miller.



Wayne Sandbakken and Denny Brenden.

VVA has Booth at this year's State Fair



CBOC News Dr. John Sneden

Save a Tree!

I know people are just trying to be helpful but please do not request records to be sent to us unless we specifically ask you to. Frequently, we receive hundreds of pages of records on patients that are not needed. We have access to the electronic records of multiple healthcare networks and can look up information as it is needed. Recently I received records for an upcoming new patient appointment (close to 500 pages worth) from a healthcare system that we have ready access to. Honestly, most of these records are not helpful for your care going forward anyway. If you had a gall bladder removed 20 years ago, we can take your word for it; records don't need to be reviewed for that sort of historical event. Now, if you had a colon polyp removed last year, we will request information we need for you. Thank you.



We had a booth in the Veteran's Bldg this year on Thursday Aug 29th. Several of the Veteran's Organizations participated in helping to educate the public on our military Groups. Thanks to those that worked Herb Carstens, Bob Syring, Dale Fonken, Jim & Kathy Hanson and Carol & Jerry Denman.

2024 Annual Picnic now in the Book!



Phil Braeger and Stephen Annett

Cook's for the day were Jim Hanson and Jerry Denman, but Floyd Herman was inspection Agent to make sure they did it right! (He told me they passed inspection)



Great brats, hamburger and hot dogs from Jorgenson Meats in Waubay.



Desserts brought by the members of VVA.....award winners again this year!



Terry & Sheerry Janssen and Darrell Boyle



Lots of great food.....even if we have to stand in line again!



Friends from SD, MN and Texas.....

Thanks to Brian DeBoer, Dennis Solberg and Jim Hanson for organizing this year's picnic.



Besides great food, we get to visits with great Veterans.



Anita & Ron Faehn and Bud & Diane Walkins



Joyce Hermans and Barb Folk



Chapter 1054 Helps Veteran in North Sioux City

Adam and Darcy Spates from North Sioux City experienced an all time disastrous flood this spring when their house not only flooded but started to go over the cliff it overlooked. Our Chapter donated \$2500 to help with living expenses while they get things organized with their insurance company and make plans for what the future would bring. Adam served in the Iowa National Guard and served in Iraq.

Each issue of the newsletter is downloaded to our website nesdvva.org for a copy in full color.

Calendar of Events Sept 2024

- 2 Labor Day
VJ Day
- 3 Codington Co Vet's Council
- 5 Vet's Council Radio Program
7:30 Am KWAT 9:00 Am KXLG
- 7 Milbank DAV
- 9 DAV
American Legion Riders
- 11 Patriot Day
VFW Auxiliary
Milbank VFW
- 12 American Legion
Milbank VFW Mtg
- 16 Sons of the American Legion
- 17 Constitution Day
Marine Corps League
Milbank American Legion
- 18 VFW
Air Force Birthday
- 19 **5:15 PM VVA Board Mtg.**
6:00 Free Meal
7:00 PM VVA General Mtg
- 20 POW/MIA Recognition Day
- 22 First Day of Autumn
- 29 Gold Star Mother's Day

Oct 2024

- 1 Codington Co Vet's Council
- 3 Radio Vets Program
7:30 am KWAT 9:00 am KXLG
- 5 DAV Milbank
- 7 American Legion Auxiliary
- 9 VFW Auxiliary
Milbank VFW
- 10 American Legion
- 13 Navy Birthday
- 14 Columbus/Native American Day
American Legion Riders
DAV
- 15 Marine Corps
Milbank American Legion
- 16 VFW
- 17 **5:15 pm VVA Board of Directors**
6:00 Free Meal
7 pm VVA General Mtg
- 21 Sons of American Legion
- 31 Happy Halloween

Veteran's Burial Benefits

In June, the US Dept of Veterans Affairs announced that they will provide a commemorative urn or plaque for a deceased veteran. Families should note that if they select the new urn or plaque option, they cannot inter their loved one at a VA National Cemetery, and cannot receive a government-furnished headstone, marker, niche cover or medallion for placement in any cemetery.

The SD Veterans Cemetery follows the eligibility requirements for burial in the Ntl Cemetery, so it is important to know if the VA provides a commemorative urn or plaque for a veteran, they will NOT be eligible for burial at the SD Veterans Cemetery.

The SD Dept of VA wants to emphasize again that if the family chooses to receive a plaque or an urn to commemorate their veteran, the decision cannot be undone. There is no path to restore eligibility. Receipt of a commemorative urn or plaque nullifies eligibility for burial in a National Cemetery, the State Veterans Cemetery, or receipt of a government furnished headstone if the veteran is to be buried in a private cemetery.

We urge all veterans to visit their county or tribal veterans service officer to learn more about this program.

Free Meal Before Meetings!

It was decided at our last meeting that a free meal will be served at 6 pm just before the meeting. Come visit with others and have dinner on us. This will be free for all VVA and AVVA members. The meetings start at 7 pm at the Elk's Lodge in Watertown.

Monthly Meeting Locations (alphabetical order)

American Legion-American Legion in Watertown
Codington County Veterans Council VFW Wtn
DAV American Legion in Watertown
Marine Corp League VFW in Watertown
Milbank American Legion American Legion in Milbank
Milbank DAV the American Legion Hall in Milbank
Milbank VFW VFW in Milbank
VFW VFW in Watertown
VVA Chapter 1054 Board of Directors 5:15 pm at Elk's
VVA 1054 Reg Mtg 7 pm Elk's Lodge
300 W Kemp, 3rd Thursday of the Month



Remember those brothers that we have lost the past couple of months:

Keep the families of lost ones in your thoughts and prayers.



Electric Wheel Chairs available for members!

We have two electric wheel chairs. If you are a Veteran or your spouse is in need of an electric wheel chair as a loaner until one is available through the VA ...

Contact: Bob Syring 605-625-5010 or Phil Braeger 605-881-6782

Application for Membership Chapter 1054

Name _____ Male _____ Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ work/cell phone _____

Branch of Service _____ Email _____

Type of Membership (Please check one)

_____ \$50 (Lifetime Membership) _____ AVVA Membership is \$100

Must submit copy of Drivers license.

Method _____ check _____ Money Order

_____ Credit Card _____ Mastercard _____ Visa _____ Discover

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ Pin # on back _____

Signature _____

Eligibility: Membership is open to US Armed Forces Veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between Nov. 1, 1955 and May 7, 1975 or any duty location between Aug. 5, 1964 & May 7, 1975. You must submit a copy of your DD-214 with this membership. VVA is a non-profit, Veterans service organization. Programs and services are funded by member dues and public donations. Please send application to Dennis Solberg, 1323 Grandview Dr, Watertown, SD 57201

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