



Paralyzed Veterans of America

North Central Chapter

North Central Chapter

209 N. Garfield Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104
1-605-336-0494 * 1-800-505-4782
Email: info@ncpva.org Website: www.ncpva.org
National PVA Website: www.pva.org



Volume 4 of 4

Oct/Nov/Dec 2023

Upcoming Events

October 2023

Oct. 12...Membership Meeting

**Oct 21-23...National Fall Conference
-Orlando. FL**

**Oct. 25..SD Veterans Council-
Brookings**

November 2023

Nov. 5...Daylight Savings Time

Nov. 7...Election Day

Nov. 9...Membership Mtg-1pm

Nov. 11...Veterans Day-Alliance

Nov. 16-18...Platte Pheasant Hunt

**Nov. 23...Thanksgiving (office
closed 23-24)**

December 2023

**Dec. 14..PVA Christmas Luncheon-
Chapter Office**

Dec. 25...Merry Christmas



Transitioning to Direct Deposit for VA Stipends

Dear Caregivers and Veterans,

Take action now: Complete your direct deposit/electronic funds transfer (EFT) enrollment.

VA will no longer issue paper checks as of October 1, 2023. To ensure uninterrupted and timely PCAFC stipend payments, all Primary Family Caregivers receiving paper checks must complete the EFT enrollment process as soon as possible or before the deadline.

Caregivers can enroll in direct deposit as a vendor through VA's Customer Engagement Portal. To complete the required form, caregivers will need their social security number, address, and bank routing and account numbers. Step-by-step instructions for enrolling can be found in the CSP Direct Deposit Enrollment User Guide.

For Caregivers that don't already have a bank account, the Veterans Benefits Banking Program (VBBP) can connect them with a bank for help setting up an account. Ensuring Timely Payments and Enhancing Security.

A new law, 31 CFR Part 208 – Management of Federal Agency Disbursements, requires that all Federal payments be made through the electronic funds transfer (EFT) system, more commonly known as direct deposit.

CSP recognizes the significance of timely stipend payments for caregivers. The EFT system supports timely stipend payments and enhances security by

minimizing fraud risks associated with traditional paper checks.

We understand that adapting to new processes may raise questions or concerns. Should you require any assistance or have inquiries about the EFT enrollment, please contact the VA Financial Services Center's Customer Care Center at 1-877-353-9791. Alternatively, you can reach out to your local CSP team for assistance. Local contact numbers are available on the find your caregiver support team webpage.

SD State Veterans Cemetery Endowment Fund

With the passing of SB 91, the South Dakota Veterans Council established an Endowment Fund with the South Dakota Community Foundation. This fund will be used for the maintenance and operations of the veterans cemetery in Sioux Falls, SD

The South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery is located at the 1-90/I-229 area in Sioux Falls, SD and encompasses up to 50 acres of land donated by the City of Sioux Falls.

All federally defined veterans, spouses, and dependent children are eligible for burial in the State Veterans Cemetery.

We are proud to be able to give our veterans their final resting place on the eastside and keep them close to their families.

<https://sdcommunityfoundation.org/for-advisors/existing-funds/south-dakota-veterans-cemetery-fund/>

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

**North Central Chapter
Paralyzed Veterans of America**

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— Attention Members —

If you are receiving your newsletter by mail and would like to receive this via email, please contact me at the Chapter Office
(LisaC@ncpva.org/605-336-0494) with your email address. This will help save the Chapter on postage and printing costs.



<http://www.facebook.com/ncpva>

Disclaimer: The North Central Chapter PVA newsletter is published six times a year. It serves its members and interested parties by informing them about chapter activities, veterans' issues, SCI related matters, advocacy and legislative developments and other relevant issues concerning disabilities and the disabled community. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the North Central Chapter, its Officers, Board Members or the Editor. Similarly, appearance of advertising herein does not constitute an endorsement of their products or services. The editor has the right to edit all articles.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

Membership-Duane Biesboer

The Chapter currently has a total of 154 members and 87 Associate Members.

Regular membership is FREE! If you know of anyone who has a spinal cord injury or disease, please have the Veteran contact the Chapter office.

Beginning October 1st, all Associate Members will be invoiced for Annual Dues. Annual dues are \$30 per year and Life Dues are \$200.00.

Thank you to those who have sent in their dues!!

Please notify the Chapter when you have a change of address.

Volunteer Program-Charles Doom

The Chapter had 339 hours for the month of September; YTD - 2,555. Terry Paulsen and Chuck Doom were June-Sept. 2023 Volunteers of the Month. Remember to look for your volunteer number in the newsletter and win a \$25 Gift Card! If you see your number, call the Chapter Office!



“Friends Aiming High”

by John Green

Framed and Matted - \$275

Print Only - \$75

To order your print, please contact the Chapter Office at (605) 336-0494

VA expands burial benefits for Veterans and their families

WASHINGTON — Today, VA announced that Veterans, and their families, caregivers, and survivors now have access to expanded burial benefits to help with end-of-life expenses related to a Veteran’s gravesite, burial, funeral and transportation of remains to their final resting place. Burial benefits are available to individuals who pay for a Veteran’s burial and funeral costs that are not reimbursed by any other organization. The updated burial benefits are:

Expanded reimbursement of transportation expenses, to include costs for transporting remains, to state or Tribal Veterans’ cemeteries in addition to previously eligible national cemeteries.

Instituted a more generous single payment rate for non-service-connected burial benefits.

Extended the VA plot or interment allowance to Tribal organizations. 00746

“Last fiscal year, VA delivered more than 84,000 burial benefits to families of Veterans,” said VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs. “Expanding burial benefits means we are able to ensure Veterans are honored in their final resting place, and assist their family, caregivers, and survivors during the difficult time of their loved one’s passing.”

VA provides burial benefits for all legal burial types, including cremation, burial at sea, and donation of remains to a medical school. Eligible individuals include a surviving spouse or legal partner, surviving child, parent or executor of the Veteran’s estate. Additionally, VA may pay burial benefits to a funeral home or third party who handled burial arrangements for a Veteran whose remains are unclaimed.

Veterans are encouraged to plan with end-of-life benefits provided by VA. These benefits include VA life insurance, care preferences, survivor benefits, and burial benefits that can be applied for in advance of a Veteran’s passing. Visit www.va.gov/plan-ahead to learn more.

There is no time limit to file for a service-connected burial, plot or interment allowance, or the transportation benefit. However, claims for non-service-connected burial benefits must be filed within two years of the Veteran’s burial or cremation. A non-service-connected burial benefit is one where the cause of death was not related to military service.



988 - SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER SPORTS & REC EVENTS

VA to review possible connections between toxic exposures and acute leukemia, chronic leukemia, and multiple myeloma

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it will conduct a scientific review to determine whether there is a relationship between three conditions — acute leukemias, chronic leukemias, and multiple myeloma outside of the head and neck — and toxic exposures for service members who deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan, and the entire Southwest Asia theater of operations.

This scientific review will help VA determine whether these conditions become presumptive conditions for Veterans. When a condition is considered presumptive, eligible Veterans do not need to prove that their service caused their disease to receive benefits for it; instead, VA automatically assumes service-connection for the disease and provides benefits accordingly.

This review is a part of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to expand benefits and services for toxic-exposed Veterans and their families. These three conditions will go through VA's new and improved process for establishing presumptive conditions, which was codified by President Biden's signing of the PACT Act — the largest expansion of Veteran care and benefits in generations. This process considers all available science and data — including Veteran claims data — to establish new presumptives, when appropriate, for Veterans as quickly as possible.

“We won't rest until we understand whether there's a connection between these deadly conditions and the service of our nation's heroes,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “But make no mistake: Veterans shouldn't wait for this review process to conclude to apply for the support they deserve. If you're a Veteran living with acute leukemia, chronic leukemia, or multiple myeloma, don't wait — apply for your VA care and benefits today.”

Although these conditions are not yet considered presumptive, it's important to note that VA does not require a condition or location to be presumptive to grant benefits for it. When a Veteran applies for benefits (in the absence of a presumptive condition), VA considers their claim on a case-by-case basis and grants disability compensation benefits if sufficient evidence shows the Veteran has a disability related to their military service.

VA encourages Veterans who live with these conditions to apply for VA health care and benefits today.

Cancers of the head and neck are already considered presumptive under the PACT Act, so this research will focus solely on acute leukemias, chronic leukemias, and multiple myeloma originating outside of the head and neck.

These conditions were chosen for scientific review based on existing scientific data and close consultations with Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, Congress, and other key stakeholders. While these are the first conditions to be announced for scientific review since the PACT Act passed into law, VA will review many additional conditions moving forward.

In addition to codifying the new presumptive review process, the PACT Act added presumptives for more than 20 presumptive disease categories. Since Biden signed the PACT Act into law Aug. 10, VA has delivered more than \$1.6 billion in PACT Act-related benefits to Veterans and their survivors. Additionally:

More than 700,000 Veterans have applied for PACT Act-related benefits.

More than 4 million Veterans have received the new toxic exposure screening.

More than 300,000 Veterans have enrolled in VA health care (43,000 more enrollments than the same time frame last year, including 98,000 enrollees from

CFC Campaign

If you are a federal government employee or your employer offers a charitable giving campaign through United Way, you can help us to continue our programs and services we offer to our members, veterans and other individual with disabilities.

CONTRIBUTION CODE: 54682



PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER, SPORTS & REC

Enjoy Autumn with an All-Terrain Track Chair

The program has expanded to 13 Minnesota state parks in August 2023. Track chairs are all-terrain, electric powered chairs that can be used on designated trails with the park. These chairs can help visitors explore areas of state parks in new ways, often on trails that are not suitable for regular wheelchairs.

Track chairs are available year-round in some locations and seasonally in others. To reserve a chair, call the park you plan to visit. Please call ahead to ensure a track chair will be available during your visit.

These chairs are available to anyone who has a need. You will be asked to sign a waiver when you check it out. No other documentation is required.

There is no charge to use the chair, but a state park vehicle permit is required for all vehicles entering the park. There are discounted vehicle permits if you have a vehicle hang tag for a disability.

Park staff are not available to help with transfer to or from the chair. If you need help with transfer, please bring someone who can assist you. Each location has a transfer board available. If you have additional transfer equipment that works with your personal chair, please bring that along.

Credit to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

VA expands maternity care coordination for Veterans

WASHINGTON — Starting Oct. 1, Veterans will have access to maternity care coordinators from the beginning of their pregnancy to 12 months postpartum — an expansion from the previous end-date of 8 weeks post-partum. These coordinators help Veterans navigate health care inside and outside of VA, connect Veterans with care after delivery, ensure access to follow-up screenings, and more. This means that all new mothers will have the support and resources they need from VA, regardless of where they give birth.

This expansion is a key step toward improving maternal outcomes for Veterans and part of the work that VA is doing to implement the White House Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis. In addition to these maternity care coordinators,

VA provides Veterans with the full range of maternity care services throughout pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum — including primary care, exams, tests, ultrasounds, newborn care, lactation support, and more.

Women Veterans are the fastest-growing cohort of Veterans who use VA, and VA currently provides health care to approximately 600,000 women Veterans — half of whom are of child-bearing age. Pregnancies in women Veterans using VA care have increased by more than 80% since 2014, from 6,950 pregnancies in 2014 to 12,524 in 2022.

“This expansion of care coordination is a critical step toward improving outcomes for Veteran mothers and their newborn children,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough. “Now, Veteran mothers will know that they have one-on-one support throughout every step of their pregnancy — from the day it begins to one year postpartum.” 13588

“Evidence shows that new mothers often need support and care coordination long after 8 weeks postpartum, which is why VA is taking action to support Veteran mothers for much longer after they give birth,” said Under Secretary for Health Shereef Elnahal, MD. “We will also screen pregnant and postpartum Veterans for social determinants of health, mental health risk factors, relationship health and safety, and more.”

“Extended follow-up care for postpartum Veterans is a great step forward, given that a significant proportion of poor maternal outcomes happen later in the postpartum period,” said Acting Chief Officer for VA Office of Women’s Health Sally Haskell, MD. “Extending postpartum care coordination up to one year allows VA maternity care coordinators the ability to double the amount of contact with their patients to help improve the physical and mental health of both parent and child.”

VA maternity care coordinators also screen for social, physical, and mental health concerns; answer questions about billing; provide resources for childbirth education; and offer lactation consulting during pregnancy and after delivery.

VA understands the importance of having a solid support system during and after pregnancy, so along with extended maternity care, the department offers essential wraparound services. In addition to primary care, this includes access to mental health care, housing assistance, and resources to address food insecurity.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

Guide and Service Dogs

The VA supports guide and service dogs for Veterans. Veterans approved for service dogs are referred to Assistance Dogs International-accredited agencies

What is the difference between a guide dog and a service dog?

A guide dog is trained to assist blind and visually impaired people by avoiding obstacles. A service dog is trained to help those with physical or hearing disabilities by alerting deaf and hearing impaired individuals to a variety of household sounds or by assisting in the performance of a wide variety of tasks depending on need and training (e.g. balance, retrieving, or pulling a wheelchair).

How do I determine if I am eligible for a service dog through the VA?

To receive any type of medical service through VA, you must register at the Health Administration enrollment section of a VA medical facility or online. Once registered, a referral to a specialist may be requested through the assigned VA primary care provider. The specialist will complete an evaluation and make a clinical determination on the need for assistive devices, including a service dog. Each Veteran's case is reviewed and evaluated by a prescribing clinician for the following:

Means to care for the dog currently and in the future.

Goals that are accomplished through the use of the dog.

Goals that are to be accomplished through other assistive technology or therapy.

Does VA actually provide the service dog?

Veterans approved for service dogs are referred to accredited agencies. There should be no charge for the dog or the associated training.

If it is determined that I am eligible for a service dog, what benefits does VA provide for my service dog?

VA will pay for veterinary care and the equipment (e.g. harness and/or backpack) required for optimal use of the dog. Veterinary care includes prescribed medications, office visits for medical procedures, and dental procedures where the dog is sedated (one sedated dental procedure will be covered annually). Vaccinations should be current when the dog is provided to the Veteran through an accredited agency. Subsequent vaccinations will be covered by VA. Prescribed food will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Veterinary care does not include over-the-counter medications, food, treats, and non-sedated dental care. Grooming, boarding, and other routine expenses are not covered.

Attorney General Jackley Urges Congress To Approve G.U.A.R.D. VA Benefits Act

PIERRE, S.D. – AG Marty Jackley has joined 43 Attorneys General in asking Congress to approve the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (G.U.A.R.D.) Act

South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley has joined 43 other Attorneys General in asking Congress to approve the Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (G.U.A.R.D.) Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits Act.

The legislation would hold unaccredited and unregulated actors accountable for targeting and preying upon veterans who apply for federal VA benefits. The unaccredited actors advertise their services as superior to the free services offered by accredited actors such as veteran service officers, claims agents, and attorneys.

“These unaccredited actors take advantage by gaining access to a veteran’s benefits information,” said Attorney General Jackley. “They are preying on our veterans and their families who have given so much for our nation.”

Attorney General Jackley encourages South Dakota veterans and anyone else who believe they are victims of a fraud or scam to contact the Attorney General’s Division of Consumer Protection at consumerhelp@state.sd.us or call 1-800-300-1986 or 605-773-4400.

Joining Attorney General Jackley in submitting the letter are the Attorneys General of Alaska, America Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER, FUNDRAISING



We're proud to be a Thrivent Choice®-enrolled organization. Through the Thrivent programs, we are eligible to receive grant dollars, fee-free donations, and support from Thrivent Action Team service projects.

To learn more about Thrivent's membership benefits and generosity programs visit thrivent.com/generosity

Qualified
Charitable
Distributions



The Pension Protection Act of 2006 first allowed taxpayers age 70½ or older to make tax-free charitable donations directly from their IRAs. Technically, these taxpayers were allowed to exclude from gross income otherwise taxable distributions from their IRA ("qualified charitable distributions," or QCDs), up to \$100,000, that were paid directly to a qualified charity.

These gifts are also known as "Charitable IRA rollovers." The law was originally scheduled to expire in 2007, but was extended periodically through 2014 by subsequent legislation, and finally made permanent by the Protect Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015.

Newsletter Booster Program
Thank you for your support!

Alan & Kathryn Gobczynski (2)
 Paul Hanson
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 Jim and Marilyn Arneson

Please support your local Chapter!

Newsletter Booster Program

The North Central Chapter PVA publishes the newsletter 6 times per year. We would like to invite our PVA members, Associate Members, and business associates to help support the Newsletter Booster Program. Your name will be published in each newsletter (unless otherwise specified) for only \$10.00. Please help defray the cost of publishing by supporting **YOUR** Chapter. Thank you!

I wish to make the following donation to the Newsletter Booster Program:

Newsletter
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Name _____
 Address _____
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Send all remittance payable to:

PVA North Central Chapter, 209 N. Garfield Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER, ADVOCACY/LEGISLATION-TERRY PAULSEN

VA HOLDS CONFERENCE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

At the beginning of September, VA held the Women's Health Services Research Conference. This is the second time the event has been held. It brings VA providers from across the country together to discuss new research being conducted around women's health.

Topics covered included using evidence-based interventions to treat post-partum depression, mental health concerns, aging care and menopause treatment, as well as suicide prevention and labor force participation. Several breakout sessions were held that focused on a range of fields such as reproductive health, addressing trauma and harassment, delivering women veterans' health care in rural areas, as well as engagement and retention of women within the VA system of care.

This was the first conference dedicated to women's health held in nine years and VA hopes to hold the event more frequently in the future. The research conducted by VA on women's health has lasting implications in the broader health care arena.

HHS ISSUES PROPOSED RULE TO UPDATE LAW THAT PROHIBITS DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [issued](#) a proposed rule to update its prohibition against discrimination on the basis of disability under [Section 504](#) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504, passed 50 years ago, prohibits disability discrimination in programs and activities run by federal agencies or that receive federal financial assistance. HHS is [proposing to amend](#) its existing regulations to outline obligations that are not explicitly addressed in Section 504. The proposed rule covers access to medical care, including non-discrimination in life-sustaining care and participation in clinical trials; enforceable standards for medical equipment, including accessible weight scales and heights for medical diagnostic equipment; and the integration of people with disabilities into a setting most appropriate for their needs. The proposed rule also seeks to improve consistency with the developments of the Americans with Disabilities Act, such as requirements to maintain accessible features of facilities and equipment, permitting individuals to use powered-driven mobility devices in areas open to the public, and accessibility design standards for facilities.

NASCIC Online Training Available to Facilitate Participation in SCI Research

The North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium (NASCIC) recently developed a free online course to present information and resources necessary to understand the complexities of a spinal cord injury (SCI).

This will ultimately aid individuals with SCI and caregivers to serve as research advocates, as well as allow SCI researchers and health care providers to effectively partner with the SCI community.

This information is condensed and presented in video form with additional supplementary material. The topics of each module are:

- Module 1 = Introduction to Research Advocacy
- Module 2 = Understanding the Research Process and R&D Decision-Makers
- Module 3 = Addressing Historical Challenges for SCI Studies
- Module 4 = SCI Biology Part I
- Module 5 = SCI Biology Part II – Aging with an SCI
- Module 6 = Neuroprotection (Acute application)
- Module 7 = Regeneration (Neurorepair)
- Module 8 = Cell Replacement (Neuroreplacement)
- Module 9 = Neuroplasticity
- Module 10 = Quality of Life
- Module 11 = SCI 101 for Researchers
- Module 12 = Getting Started!

Registration for the course is free for everyone and can be accessed on the NASCIC website at: <https://nascic.org/courses/nascic-community-engagement-program-cep/>.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER, ADVOCACY/LEGISLATION-TERRY PAULSEN

DOT SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCED IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINT OF DISABILITY RIGHTS ADVOCATE ENGRACIA FIGUEROA

On September 28, PVA and three other disability organizations issued a joint statement in response to a settlement agreement between the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and United Airlines following a complaint from the late disability rights advocate Engracia Figueroa.

In July 2021, Figueroa returned home to Los Angeles after speaking at a rally in Washington, D.C. and discovered the airline had severely damaged her custom wheelchair. Stuck in a low-quality manual wheelchair for five hours at the airport, the airline sent her home in an ill-fitting loaner chair. After spending weeks in an improper chair fighting for the airline to fix her wheelchair, Figueroa developed pressure ulcers that became infected and spread to her bones. Despite emergency surgeries, she passed away on October 31, 2021.

The DOT settlement with United requires the airline to undertake a number of efforts to improve the air travel experience of wheelchair users. Specifically, the settlement requires the airline to:

- Roll out a flight filter on its booking engine to make it easier for passengers who use wheelchairs to find flights where their wheelchairs can fit and be safely transported.

- Refund the fare difference for passengers with wheelchairs that use the flight filter when the passenger's preferred flight cannot accommodate their wheelchair and the flight that they travel on with their wheelchair is more expensive.

- Conduct a pilot program to explore whether additional equipment, such as a medical wheelchair or other form of moveable or non-moveable chair, can be utilized to safely accommodate passengers waiting for loaner wheelchairs because of damage or delay to their personal wheelchairs during a flight.

- Provide passengers whose wheelchairs were damaged or delayed accommodation options, including United ensuring the timely delivery of the loaner wheelchair to the passenger, as part of the pilot program.

- Seek feedback from each passenger who checks a wheelchair for transport in the aircraft cargo compartment. United will take the feedback into consideration when developing and enhancing its practices and procedures for handling wheelchairs.

The joint statement released by PVA says that, "While nothing can erase the pain and suffering Engracia endured, nor bring her back to her family and community, we recognize the actions that United Airlines will be required to take as part of the settlement with the [DOT] and see it as an important first step forward in acknowledging the challenges and real dangers that many people with disabilities encounter when they travel by air." It further states, however that "much more needs to be done to increase air travel accessibility and prevent injury and loss of life."

HOUSE PASSES H.R. 1530

On September 21, the House passed H.R. 1530, the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act, which would improve VA benefits accessibility by requiring VA to publish disability benefit questionnaires on the VA's website for use by a veteran's private provider.

It also requires a report on improving access to travel reimbursement pay for veterans living abroad who must attend a disability exam.

Other provisions in the bill will improve communication regarding the scheduling of disability exams between contractors, veterans, and the veteran's accredited representative.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

From the Office of Brad Friez National Serviced Officer

As we approach fall and eventual colder temperatures this will be my annual reminder for those who are snow birds to prepare for your travels down south. In the past we had mentioned the Traveling Veteran Coordinator who will coordinate a Veteran's care while away from their primary residence. To begin this process please reach out to your primary care provider preferably 4-6 weeks before your travel is to begin. The following information is what you need to provide to your provider: the specific travel destination and temporary address, a valid phone number, arrival and departure dates and specific care concerns.

Each VA Hospital will have a Traveling Veteran Coordinator at their specific location and they will work with your provider to ensure your medical treatment continues at your winter destination. Also, please prepare yourself and your vehicle and equipment for that travel south. Do you have enough medication and supplies to last during the time away? Is your vehicle and any adaptive equipment in good working order? Preparation is wise.

We found out this week that the Sioux Falls, SD VA Regional Office was number one in the country in the accuracy of processing claims at slightly over 99%. Congratulations on that great accomplishment!

As of October 1 st all Caregivers in the VA's Caregiver Support Program will have their pay electronically deposited into a bank account; previously checks were mailed to those participants. Our hope is that all who are a part of that program have switched to a bank account so there is no interruption in the payment of their benefits.

Platte Pheasant Hunt 16-18 November 2023

Members / Associate members,

The Platte Pheasant hunt is scheduled for 16-18 November 2023. We will arrive in Platte on Thursday,

November 16th and check into our assigned rooms and then attend the Social at the Legion Hall on main

street starting at 6:30 p.m. Breakfast will be served at the Community Center on the morning of Fri-

Day, November 17th and then proceed to the fields for a fun day of hunting. We will then be served dinner at

the community center that night along with the silent auction that the community puts on. Breakfast will be served at the community center on Saturday, November 18 th and then proceed to the fields for another day of hunting. Everyone will travel home Saturday afternoon after the hunt. I would remind everyone that the PVA Chapter will pay for (1) one nights lodging for Friday, November 17th . You will be responsible for your lodging the night of Thursday, November 16th . Please call the chapter office (605) 336-0494 if you are planning on attending so we can put you on the list and so we can coordinate the lodging. This hunt fills up fast so we will need to know as soon as possible who is wanting to attend. Any questions can be directed to Terry or Lisa at the chapter office. Once we have the list of attendees Terry will send a confirmation letter to those that have been signed up to attend. Thanks

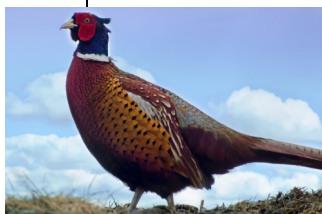
Kimberly Jackson sworn in as VA's chief of staff 10/10/2023 08:13 AM EDT

WASHINGTON — Today, Kimberly Jackson was sworn in by Secretary Denis McDonough as VA's chief of staff. In this role, Chief of Staff Jackson will help lead the Department of Veterans Affairs as it continues to deliver more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before in the nation's history.

Chief of Staff Jackson served as a Naval Reserve officer from 2012 to 2020, holding assignments in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Naval Special Warfare, and the Chief of Naval Operations' Strategic Studies Group. Most recently, she served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for force readiness — the principal advisor to the secretary of defense on the strategic and operational readiness of the Armed Forces.

“Kimberly Jackson is a proven leader who has spent her life serving our nation and its Veterans,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “We're thrilled to have her join us to help lead VA as we continue delivering more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before.”

“It's the honor of my life to join VA and serve Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors,” said VA Chief of Staff Kimberly Jackson. “I am forever grateful to President Biden and Secretary McDonough for this opportunity, and I will work every day to make sure our nation's heroes get the world-class care and benefits they deserve.”



PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

VA expands burial benefits for Veterans and their families

VA announced that Veterans, and their families, caregivers, and survivors now have access to expanded burial benefits to help with end-of-life expenses related to a Veteran's gravesite, burial, funeral and transportation of remains to their final resting place.

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- Expanded reimbursement of transportation expenses, to include costs for transporting remains, to state or Tribal Veterans' cemeteries in addition to previously eligible national cemeteries.
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Veterans are encouraged to plan with end-of-life benefits provided by VA. These benefits include VA life insurance, care preferences, survivor benefits, and burial benefits that can be applied for in advance of a Veteran's passing. Visit www.va.gov/plan-ahead to learn more.

VA awards \$16 million to help Veterans with disabilities participate in adaptive sports

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it awarded nearly \$16 million in grant funding to 91 national, regional, and community programs to help more than 13,000 Veterans and service members with disabilities participate in adaptive sports. This funding will help these organizations plan, develop, manage, and implement a variety of sports and equine therapy activities, including life-improving programs for Veterans and training for providers.

Adaptive sports are competitive or recreational sports and activities customized to fit the needs of Veterans with disabilities, including paralympic sports, archery, cycling, skiing, hunting, rock climbing, and sky diving. These activities allow Veterans to rehabilitate through recreation and encourage an active and fit lifestyle.

Helpline Center Offers New Survivor of Suicide Loss Website

The Helpline Center has offered support to those bereaved by suicide loss since 1999 and now, thanks to funds raised through The 437 Project, they are able to expand how they can meet individuals in their grief.

We're happy to announce that they have also launched a new website designed with the goal of providing hope and help to even more suicide loss survivors. There are many new features on the site and we encourage you to take a look and help us spread the word!

[Healing After a Suicide Loss](#) booklet, [In Remembrance](#) page, [Resource Library](#)

In addition to the website and resources, they will begin offering a virtual support group online on the third Wednesday of each month via Zoom. They truly want to support individuals across South Dakota and are hopeful these new opportunities will provide just that. To learn more about their survivor resources or their virtual support group, please email griefsupport@helplinecenter.org.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

THE **ALLIANCE**
SOUTH DAKOTA MILITARY HERITAGE ALLIANCE, INC.

VETERANS DAY AT THE ALLIANCE - 2023
Tribute – Alliance – Honor

Join us Veterans Day 2023 (Nov. 11th) for a Celebration of America's Story.

America's Storyteller, Jeff Gould, shares the remarkable story of America, as only he can tell it. Uplifting, touching and profound, it is a presentation that inspires listeners to consider the sacrifice and blessing of our nation's history.

Spend the evening with fellow Americans, celebrating what is great about this country and those who helped defend it.

Doors Open - 4:00pm

Opening Performance - 5:30 by Danica Michaels
Story of America - 6:30pm (Jeff Gould)

Dinner - 5:00pm

Opening Remarks - 6:00pm



Danica Michaels is our hometown country singer songwriter that has opened for such acts as Randy Houser, Lainey Wilson, Jerrod Niemann, Priscilla Block, Morgan Evans, Jay Allen and Tyler Braden.



This popular keynote shares the remarkable story of America, as only Jeff Gould can tell it. Uplifting, touching and profound, it is a presentation that inspires listeners to consider the sacrifice and blessing of our nation's history.

Ticket Information:

- Table includes 8 tickets w/meal \$1,000
- Veteran (Event Floor w/meal) \$25
- Civilian (Event Floor w/meal) \$50
- Veteran (Balcony no meal) Free
- Civilian (Balcony no meal) \$25

Our goal is to continue providing services, fulfilling our mission, and crucially, building on our success to now add focus on an all-too-familiar foe: veteran and military servicemember suicide.



1600 W. Russell St. Sioux Falls, SD 57104
www.southdakotaalliance.org
605.271.1582

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER**PVA North Central Chapter****Birthday Roster - October-December 2023**

Richard Scepaniak-Oct. 1	Ken Murphy-Oct. 22
Chad Jacobs-Oct. 4	Dana Davis-Oct. 21
Steve Stanga-Oct. 5	Kirk Spell-Oct. 22
Richard Branaugh-Oct. 6	Andrew Foss-Oct. 24
Cal Plienis-Oct. 8	Ray Berlin-Oct. 25
Jerry Painter-Oct. 13	Dan Kernan-Oct. 29
Leonard Ellens-Oct. 15	Robert Dietz-Oct. 30
Scott Bentz-Oct. 16	Darrell Christophers-30
Curtis Bentz-Oct. 17	John Effling-Oct 26
Darrell Craig-Oct. 17	Monica Chesshir-Oct 30
Doug Feltman-Oct. 19	
Robert This-Oct. 20	
Jesse Luce-Oct. 20	
Charles Olson-Oct. 20	
Daryl Schutte-Oct. 20	
Leola Klosterbuer-Nov 3	Tom Anez-Nov. 6
Mike Olson-Nov. 6	Darrell Poss-Nov 10
Rod Melinsky-Nov 11	Kristine Shaffer-Nov 16
Dennis Weideman-Nov 21	Kevin Weishaar-Nov 22
Bill Livingston-Nov 23	Dennis Doherty-Nov 25
Dylan Lesselyoung-Nov 27	Barb Biesboer-Nov 27
Mike Needham-Nov 19	Mark Grenfeld-Nov. 29
Larry Miller-Nov 28	Steve Stewart-Nov 30
Leland Olson-Dec 1	Steve Vogt-Dec 3
Tony Hylland-Dec 6	David Byrd-Dec 6
Alan Gobiczynski-Dec 7	Dan Francis-Dec 7
Willard Black-Dec 8	Jim Huckabay-Dec 8

John Pike-Dec 10	Jon Olson-Dec 11
Dennis Theel-Dec 11	Frank Hood-Dec 17
Paul Haggar-Dec 20	John Trautman-Dec 26
Jeanne Saunders-Dec 27	Darryl Schock-Dec 29
Lyle Monsees-Dec	14

**988 Suicide Crisis Line**

On July 16, 2022, 988 became the national three-digit phone number for all mental health, substance use, and suicide crises. 988 will be routed to South Dakota's only National Suicide Prevention Lifeline center, **The Helpline Center**, transitioning from the current Lifeline number, 1-800-273-8255. 988 will offer rapid access to behavioral health support through connection with trained crisis specialists.

How will 988 differ from 211? 211 is a non-emergency number for finding community resources, such as food banks and shelters. 911 is currently used for all emergencies, including mental health emergencies. 988 will be a mental health crisis number, and calls will be handled by National Suicide Prevention Lifeline counselors.

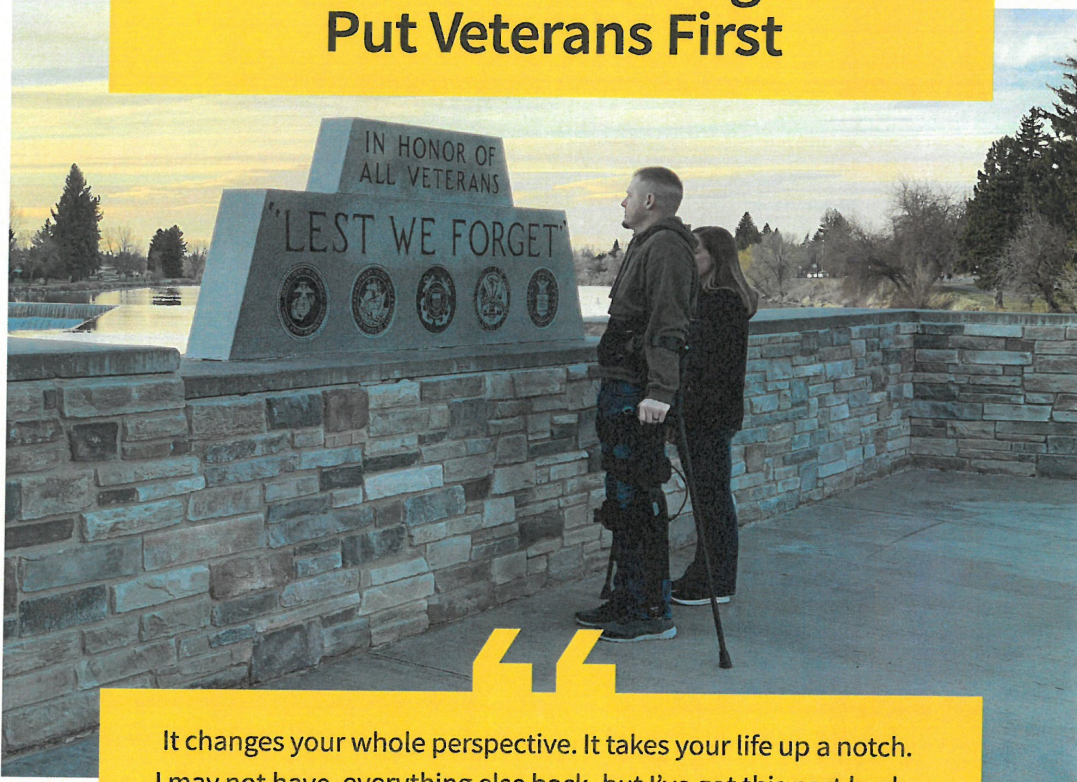
When should you call 988? Anyone in need of crisis support for themselves or someone else should call 988 which started on July 16th. 988 is an opportunity to transform our country's behavioral health crisis system to respond to anyone in need.

Is 1-800-273-8255 going away? No. Moving to 988 does not mean the 800 number goes away. Dialing either number will get people to the same services, no matter which number they use. In the end, 988 is an easier-to-remember way for all Americans to access a strengthened and expanded network of crisis call centers.

For more information about 988, click on: <https://sdsuicideprevention.org/988-2/>.

PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER

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PVA NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER



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**Veterans
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Paralyzed Veterans of America North Central Chapter relies solely on private donations and receives NO government funding! Your contribution is 100% tax deductible, as we are a 501(c) (3) corporation. Support by individual donors and businesses enable us to make our services FREE to members.

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Sioux Falls, SD 57104



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YOUR NAME OR NUMBER IS
LISTED.

CHUCK DOOM
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
COORDINATOR

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

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Paralyzed Veterans of America
North Central Chapter
209 N. Garfield Ave
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

VA Health Care Systems Contact Information

Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

2501 West 22nd Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57105
Phone: (605) 336-3230 or (800) 316-8387
Fax: (605) 333-6878

VA Black Hills Health Care System - Fort Meade Campus

113 Comanche Road
Fort Meade, SD 57741
Phone: (605) 347-2511 or (800) 743-1070
Fax: (605) 720-7171

VA Black Hills Health Care System

500 North 5th Street
Hot Springs, SD 57747
Phone: 605-745-2000
Fax: 605-745-2091

Minneapolis VA Health Care System

One Veterans Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55417
Phone: (612) 725-2000 or 866-414-5058
Fax: (612) 725-2049

Fargo VA Health Care System

2101 Elm Street
Fargo, ND 58102
Phone: (701)232-3241
Fax: (701)239-3705

VA Montana Health Care System

1892 Williams Street
Fort Harrison, MT 59636
Phone: (406) 442-6410
Fax: (406) 447-7916

Cheyenne VA Health Care System

2360 E. Pershing Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82001
Phone: (307)778-7550
Fax: (307) 778-7336

Sheridan VA Health Care System

1898 Fort Road
Sheridan, WY 82801
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Fax: (307) 672-1900

The PVA North Central Chapter proudly serves the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Southwest Minnesota, and portions of Montana and Wyoming.