

THE DAKOTA MESSENGER

A Publication of the South Dakota National
Guard Enlisted Association Auxiliary

FEBRUARY, 2016

NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

I hope this finds you all healthy and enjoying the new year. Our household has been busy with the start of wrestling season as well as the kids being busy with school.

The beginning of the year marks the beginning of our membership drive. We have some new members this year and I am excited to have them in this wonderful group. If there are spouses out there that you know, please encourage them to become a member of the Auxiliary. Applications are available on our website. As some of you know, membership strength and numbers help to support our voice on legislative issues that can make a difference to all airmen, soldiers and their families. I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions. All in all, it is a great group of people and I look forward to expanding this organization.

There are many opportunities to do things within the Auxiliary. One of those is the availability of scholarships. The SDNGEA Auxiliary is awarding a \$1,000 scholarship this year. Applications and information can be found at www.sdngear.com.

Applications are due March 15, 2016. I encourage any family member who is eligible to apply. The National Association also offers scholarships in the amounts of \$3,000, \$1,250 and two \$1,000. Information for these scholarships is available on the SDNGEA website under the Auxiliary section.

Legislative Dining Out is scheduled for February 4th in Pierre, and is rapidly approaching. I will be attending and hope to see and meet others as well.

The state conference will be held in Rapid City April 21-23. Councils will start meeting on April 21st. Registration forms are available on the SDNGEA website, as well. It is always a good time, in addition to meeting as a group to conduct business and identifying legislative priorities. There are many new as well as old items which I would like to bring to the conference. Any input from attendees is welcome.

Thank you all for your continued support. I am continually learning new things about the Auxiliary and the wonderful organization that it is. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions

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you may have. I look forward to seeing everyone in April.

Kayleen Meyers
SDNGEA Auxiliary President

COMMENTS FROM OUR LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMMAN

This year, 2016, the two year terms of all Senators and Representatives of the Districts in South Dakota will expire and there will be an election to elect new Senators and Representatives. The primary election is June 7, and the fall election is November 8. All counties in South Dakota will also hold elections for various county offices. It is important to elect persons who will work to help our military, benefits and etc.

The South Dakota Legislative Session commenced on January 12, 2016 and runs to March 10, 2016; there will be a two-week recess and legislators return to Pierre on March 29, for veto day. You can follow the Pierre Legislative Session on the website by going to: <http://legis.sd.gov/>. Click on South Dakota Legislature and you can check on Bills, etc.

Also when the CALLS come from EANGUS, please answer them and write to our South Dakota Senators and Representatives with your concerns.

Marlys List
Legislative Chairman



“REMEMBER EVERYONE DEPLOYED BY WEARING RED ON FRIDAY”

Let them know that we have not forgotten them, and that we appreciate their sacrifice for the country.

REMINDER REGARDING SCHOLARHIP APPLICATONS

Membership dues for 2016 must be paid by December 31, 2015 to be eligible for the scholarship. Applications are currently available and must be returned by March 15, 2016.

For more information or to request a scholarship packet contact:

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SD DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN’S AFFAIRS

Secretary Zimmerman January
2016 Column

During the month of December, I walked around with an adrenaline rush from all the holiday goodies I was sneaking! And now the month of January has provided me with an outburst of rewarding experiences that I will never forget.

At a Jan. 12 ceremony in the State Capitol and in numerous communities throughout South Dakota, over 450 South Dakota veterans were recognized for their service during the Korean War and were presented the Korean Ambassador Peace Medal. This day and this celebration exemplified the partnership we share with the Republic of Korea, and the brotherhood those who have served will always possess. It was a true honor to share this day with true heroes from the Korean War and true patriots from our great state and the Republic of Korea.

Although the Korean War was sandwiched between World War II and the Vietnam Conflict, these heroes will not be forgotten. Our Department and our partners will continue to find these heroes and thank them for their service.

If you missed the ceremony, our dear friends at South Dakota Public Broadcast have archived the video and are making DVDs of the ceremony available (<http://shop.sdpb.org/index.php?product&id=330>)

Jan. 13 was moving day at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans

Home. Our heroes now live in a neighborhood concept nursing facility. Each of the eight individual neighborhoods has its own unique personality and care level.

Our new home is organized in a way intended to maximize normal living environments and routines. The residents are given more privacy and control over their own lives. Staff become family, and therefore have more investment in the residents' quality of life. This is not your traditional nursing home and we look forward to showcasing it.

In partnering with the South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations, we closed the month of January with a Tribal Relations celebration. Our staff had the opportunity to brief tribal leaders on the programs and services available to their veterans. And our staff, in turn, got to hear first-hand about the challenges that our nine tribes face on a daily basis. We truly enjoyed being a part of this celebration and applaud the efforts of our tribal leaders for the difference they make in our veteran's lives.

As always, thank you for all that you do for our veterans and their families. Never stop thanking them for their service.

Larry Zimmerman, Secretary

(I have asked Larry Zimmerman to share his column with our Auxiliary members....Joann McElroy, Editor)

Tidbits from your Editor:

When visiting a National Cemetery have you ever noticed a coin left on a headstone? Leaving a coin on a headstone lets the deceased soldiers' family know that someone stopped by to pay their respect. Leaving a penny means you visited. A nickel means that you and the deceased soldier trained at boot camp together. If you served with the soldier, you leave a dime. A quarter is very significant because it means that you were there when that soldier died.

“Wreaths Across America” is celebrated annually on the 2nd Saturday in December. This is a movement to cover all Veterans' grave markers with a Christmas wreath. The mission of Wreaths Across America is to remember, honor and teach. It strives to remember our fallen heroes, honor those who serve and teach our children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms.

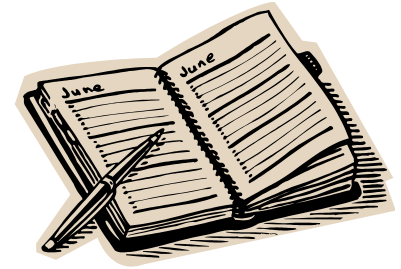
I would like to share this poem which was recently shared with me. I do not know the author. Times have changed as this now applies to husbands.

“THE MILITARY SPOUSE”

A woman for all seasons
A woman for today.
She grows to meet the challenges
And grows along the way.
Her life is not an easy one
With many loads to bear.
But she proudly serves her
husband and the uniform he
wears.
Throughout the years, she
marches

On through tears and joy and
strife.
She's America's unsung hero-
She's a Military Wife.

Joann McElroy
Editor



MARK YOUR CALENDAR WITH THE FOLLOWING LIST OF EVENTS:

February 4, 2016:

Legislative Dining Out –
Pierre, SD

April 21-23, 2016:

SDNGEA Conference-
Rapid City, SD

August 21-24, 2016: 45th

EANGUS National
Conference, New Orleans, LA

September 17, 2016: Black
Hills Veteran's Honor March
Deadwood, SD



PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

Diane Kafka asks for prayers for her brother David, a veteran. David had a brain bleed due to complications from an angiogram which resulted in a stroke to his left side. He is currently in the VA hospital in Portland, OR. When he becomes medically stable, he will be transferred to a VA rehab facility. He is also waiting for open heart surgery to replace his left valve. There is a possibility that he could have a heart attack or another stroke at any time.

I would like to personally ask for your thoughts and prayers as I have my third back surgery on March 24. The fusion which I had last April did not work, therefore, I will now have a rod and screws put in my back and hopefully this will correct things. "Third time is the charm", at least I hope! - Joann McElroy



Happy St.Patrick's Day !

Joann McElroy - Editor