

ArtsGram

Monumental Expressions



A Daily Publication of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Sunday, October 22, 2006

Monumental Expressions and Quotable Quotes

For some, participating in creative arts programs provides hope and the ability to deal with some of life's challenges. This week we have had the opportunity to share this awesome experience with some of the best artists and performers in the country. Here's what some of them had to say:



Dennis Van De Car

"Participating in the arts gives me a reason to express myself. The day I received the news that I had won and was invited to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, the sun broke through the clouds."

Dennis Van De Car, Redlands, Calif.
Artist (Suncatcher or Sand Art Kit)

"It feels terrific to again be a part of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Attending the Festival is like rejoining a large family; every sentiment known to man is expressed and there are no barriers. Singing and performing are good for the soul, and heal every fiber of your mind and body."

Lionel Marcoux, Milan, Ill.
Performer

"It is an honor to be selected as a national winner and invited to perform at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. I entered the competition to remind myself that all things are possible, despite any disability you may have."

Charlene Grant, Baltimore, Md.
Group Poetry and Liturgical Dance
Performer



Charlene Grant



Rebecca James

"I am very excited about participating in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. It has renewed my interest in writing, drawing and painting. This has definitely been a great form of therapy after breaking my back and neck. It makes me feel like I can do something worthwhile again."

Rebecca James, Van Nuys, Calif.
Creative Writing (Personal Experience)

"I feel that the arts are one of the best ways to express oneself. I am blessed to see the spectacular results of that at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival."

Dwayne Scheuneman, Clearwater, Fla.
Wheelchair Dance Performer

"When I'm on-stage, I feel like the most important person at that moment. Participating in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival has helped me overcome stage fright, and I do not isolate myself as much as I used to. I have met a lot of wonderful people at this event and I will never forget their kindness."

Barbara Chaney, Temple, Texas
Performer





Secretary Nicholson Visits

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson arrives today for his second visit to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. “Our talented veterans are shining examples of the healing power of the arts,” said Nicholson. “Many participants were introduced to the arts in the rehabilitation programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The arts are one of many tools that VA uses in the recovery of our heroes.” Expect to see him at the art exhibit and performance, as well as the closing ceremonies this evening.

A graduate of West Point, Nicholson served eight years on active duty as a paratrooper and Ranger-qualified Army officer, then 22 years in the Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of colonel. He is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War.

Nicholson was nominated by President Bush to serve as Secretary of Veterans Affairs on December 9, 2004. He was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on January 26, 2005, and was sworn into office on February 1. Just prior to joining the President’s Cabinet, he served as the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican.

As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Nicholson is the principal advocate for veterans in the U.S. government, ensuring that they receive the care, support, recognition and dignity they deserve for their service to our country.



Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson

Tune in to the Festival on PBS this Fall!



As the result of the concerted efforts of the VA Central Office Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Office, excerpts from Sunday’s stage performance will be shown on select Public Broadcasting System (PBS) stations around the country in upcoming

weeks. Under the terms of a new partnership, VA is working with South Dakota Public Broadcasting to condense the stage show into a 60-minute television presentation, which will then be closed captioned and distributed through the National Educational Telecommunications Association to PBS stations nationwide. The target date for the broadcast on local PBS affiliates is the week of Veterans Day 2006, although some stations may choose to show it at a later time.

“I cannot think of a more fitting Veterans Day tribute than the broadcast of this fine demonstration of talent by America’s veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. “This broadcast is an unprecedented event that will showcase the hard work of veterans and the positive impact of the creative arts in the lives of those who served in uniform,” said Nicholson. “For the first time, Americans from coast to coast will be able to see rehabilitative therapy in action.”

Unfortunately, because the show must be edited to fit the 60-minute format for airing, not all acts can be featured. Also, some may be shortened to fit the broadcast requirements. While it is up to each local PBS station to select programming, a number have already expressed an interest or committed to airing the show. These include:

Organization	City	State
WJCT-TV (Channel 7)	Jacksonville	Fla.
WCNY-TV (Channel 24)	Syracuse	N.Y.
WMHT-TV (Channel 17)	Troy	N.Y.
WSKG-TV (Channel 46)	Vestal	N.Y.
WPBS-TV (Channel 16)	Watertown	N.Y.
WTVI-TV (Channel 42)	Charlotte	N.C.
WPSU-TV (Channel 3)	University Park	Pa.
WETA-TV (Channel 26)	Arlington	Va.
KRMA-TV (Channel 6)	Denver	Colo.
WDCQ/WDCP-TV (Channel 19/35)	University Center	Mich.
KTWU-TV (Channel 11)	Topeka	Kan.
WUSF-TV (Channel 16)	Tampa	Fla.
KUEN-TV (Channel 9)	Salt Lake City	Utah

Nicholson said, “We are extremely grateful for the help and cooperation of South Dakota Public Broadcasting and the National Educational Telecommunications Association for making this dream a reality.” Check your local PBS station for more information.





Ghost Towns of the Black Hills

Between 1876 and 1930, more than 400 towns and numerous mines were built and subsequently abandoned in the Black Hills of South Dakota. A major gold rush in the late 1870s attracted many farmers seeking their fortunes. Settlements appeared along the railroad corridor, and the main mining districts were located within a rectangle bounded by Deadwood in the northeast and Custer in the southwest.

The city of Deadwood was incorporated in 1876. It was named for the dead trees that were found in the narrow canyon where you'll find historic Main and Sherman Streets. Harsh winters, valuable farmland and lack of government-owned property all contributed to the demise of many of these towns.

In the late 1980s, limited stakes gaming fueled Deadwood's economy and rejuvenated this community with its once proud past. Today, Victorian facades, brick streets, period lighting and colorful trolleys greet visitors to one of the few communities in America listed as a National Historic Landmark.

The town attracts more than two million visitors annually and boasts the graves of two of the most well-known gun slingers in the wild west, Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickock. In fact, Wild Bill was killed in Deadwood while playing poker with his back to the door. The two are buried side-by-side in the Mt. Moriah Cemetery.

These days, visitors can try their luck panning for gold in an old gold mine or peruse over 50 stores and restaurants. Deadwood hosts every event from poker tournaments and motor rallies to concerts and festivals. Additionally, instead of getting a work-out running from the law, visitors can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities such as hiking, biking or fishing amidst the majestic Black Hills scenery.



Top photo is Deadwood today. Bottom photo is the city in 1876.



Thank you!

The VA Black Hills Health Care System has done a tremendous job hosting the 2006 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Their efforts, not only this past week but well over the past year, have resulted in an experience that none of us will soon forget. Special kudos to our host site coordinator, Al Johnson, and all of the local planning committee chairpersons, members and volunteers, who worked tirelessly to make sure the 2006 Festival was an outstanding success.

A special thank-you to VA Black Hill's top management team, Peter P. Henry, Director; Steve DiStasio, Associate Director for Operations; Gwen Schroeder, Associate Director for Patient Services; and Michael Davies, M.D., Chief of Staff; for their continuing support and leadership during the past year.

Congratulations, everyone on a "monumental" job – and thank you for your commitment to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival!





Let Us Entertain You – Tonight!

It's been quite a week of rehearsing, performing, learning and exploring, but tonight it is our turn to entertain you! Come to the Closing Ceremonies this evening in the Rushmore Room at the Ramkota. Entertainment begins at 6:30 p.m., furnished by extremely popular retro-rock dance band *DD and the Fayrohs*.

The formal program begins at 7 p.m., with host site Director Peter Henry serving as our master of ceremonies for the evening. We will also hear from key leaders from the three organizations who present this wonderful event each year; Executive Director of Help Hospitalized Veterans, Mike Lynch; National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, JoAnn Cronin; and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson.

Several special awards will be presented during the program, and this year's recipient will be named for the Shirley Jefferies

Memorial Award, presented each year to one individual who demonstrates true dedication to the creative arts program. Also tonight, the 2006 host site director will ceremoniously pass on the program to next year's host site director from St. Louis, Mo.



DD and the Fayrohs

At around 9:30 p.m., the celebration continues when *DD and the Fayrohs* return for more entertainment, dancing and fun. Hope to see you there – and save the last dance for me!

Lights, Camera, Action!



You've waited all week for the stage show and art exhibit and it's finally here! Today in the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center from 12:30–1:45 p.m., our veteran artists will display their artwork and be on hand to discuss their pieces with fellow participants, special guests and the general public. Immediately following the exhibit, the 2006 stage show will commence. The show is expected to last more than two hours and should be more exciting than ever.

Today's show will feature a record five production numbers. There are numerous individual acts, group performances and back this year, the reading of a winning creative writing piece. The show incorporates many different scenes including a cabaret scene, a train scene, and of course, a patriotic scene.

Star of Hollywood's Golden Era, Jane Powell, will again join us as the mistress of ceremonies. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson; ALA President JoAnn Cronin; and HHV Founder and President Roger Chapin will all attend both the art exhibit and the performance.

Another Festival favorite performing his rendition of "New York, New York" is Dan Krenhbiel, from Black River Falls, Wis. Ron Tomocik of Denver, Colo. considers himself an "ethnic accordionist" – bet you can't wait to find out what that's all about! Don't miss another inspiring multimedia performance from Rick Stang, and Daniel Condon will touch your heart with his creative writing piece, "Just Something I want to Share."



All of these veterans have worked tirelessly throughout the week to put on an inspiring art exhibit and stage show. So come early and get ready to be wowed!

Transportation will be provided to the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center. Performers will be leaving from Convention Center I at 11:30 a.m.; and artists will be leaving from Convention Center II at noon.

Transportation to the Civic Center is as follows:

- Performers depart the hotel at 11:30 a.m.
- Artists depart the hotel at noon.
- Staff and guests depart at 12:30 p.m. (Please be patient. After the buses have delivered the artists and performers to the Civic Center, they will return and pick up others.
- Buses leave the Civic Center to return to the Ramkota at 5:30 p.m.



We don't want to give away all the surprises, but here's a brief preview of the exciting show ahead.

On stage again for the first time in 20 years is Dezire Lauture of Temple, Texas, singing "Begin the Beguine."





The Show Must Go On!



Miss Jane Powell presents Donald Gibby his Festival Medal.



The leatherworking workshop was a great success. (Left to right) Connie Smith from Killeen, Texas; Gerald Collogan from Hot Springs, S.D.; workshop instructor Larry Belitz; Vicki Booth from Seattle, Wash.; and Ron Samuels from Riverside, Calif.

Monumental Expressions
from the Festival





Stage Notes

Studio Notes

Beating the Butterflies

Whether you're performing a violin solo, dancing with a partner, making your theatrical debut or showing your winning piece of artwork, stage fright can be a very real challenge for many visual and performing artists. No matter if you are alone on stage or sharing it with dozens of others; or whether you are explaining your art to a limited few back home or to hundreds of guests at a formal art exhibit, those butterflies really can be reduced or even eliminated.



It is natural to get a little nervous about performing or standing in front of others, but if you've got a really bad case of stage fright, take a look at the following tips to help you from being too nervous.



- ✓ Accept that stage fright is a natural reaction to performing or standing in front of an audience.
- ✓ Decide ahead of time what you might do if something goes wrong.

✓ Imagine the absolute worst thing that could happen to you if things went terribly wrong. Now, estimate the

chances of that really happening. It is probably nonexistent!

✓ Make sure you know your lines well if you are performing; practice how you will explain your artwork.

✓ Eat lightly and avoid any foods known to upset your system.

✓ Realize that stage fright is generally about the anticipation that builds up before the performance, and once you get started the nervousness typically goes away.

✓ A simple exercise before getting on stage or going out to meet the audience is to make a visual run-through of yourself in whatever role you're performing. Incorporating this with slow, deep breathing can help you.

✓ Relax, have fun, and enjoy the exhibit and the show!



Transportation Schedule

Monday departure information:

Please check the time of your flight home, and be ready to catch the shuttle from the hotel to the Rapid City Airport at the time indicated. **Please bring your luggage to the hotel lobby 30 minutes before the departure time to get your luggage loaded into the bus.** Safe travels home, everyone!

Flight Time:	Hotel Departure Time:
6 – 6:59 a.m.	4 a.m.
7 – 8:29 a.m.	5:30 a.m.
8:30 – 9:59 a.m.	7 a.m.
10 – 10:59 a.m.	8 a.m.
11 – 11:59 a.m.	9 a.m.
Noon – 12:50 p.m.	10 a.m.
1:44 – 2:54 p.m.	11:30 a.m.
3:35 – 4:30 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
5:24 p.m.	3:15 p.m.

For any other arrangements, please contact Festival Transportation at (605) 415-3446.

Festival Fun Facts

Highlighting some of our medal winning artists and performers.

■ **Becky James**, an Air Force veteran from Van Nuys, Calif., was selected as KNX (CBS) 1070 AM radio's Citizen of the Week for her work with the Veterans History Project. James will also be included in the *2006-2007 Manchester Who's Who* among executive and professional women, in the honors edition. The inspiration for her award winning creative writing piece came from an interview with a WWII veteran for the Veterans History Project. She will perform in the chorus in today's show.

■ **Eddie Szyborski**, an Army veteran from Centereach, N.Y., knows all about the value of music therapy – he's a music therapist himself and holds a masters degree in music therapy. Szyborski finds that participating in the arts helps regain self-confidence, improve self-esteem and provide motivation. This is his first time at the Creative Arts Festival.



F-Y-I



Team Leader Meetings

Meet with your team leader this morning at 11 a.m.

NVCAF Web site www.creativeartsfestival.org

Share the Festival with your friends and family back home! Tell them to log onto the Festival Web site to check out the daily editions of the *ArtsGram* and individual news releases and photos, located on the "Participant Information" tab.

Medical Suite

Today is a day that will be filled with excitement. Be sure you get proper rest and drink plenty of

fluids before the art exhibit and stage show. The medical team will be available on Sunday from 7 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; and 5 – 10 p.m.; and Monday 7 a.m. – 12 noon in Room 1702. They will be available today at the Civic Center. If you have any medical issues or concerns, please contact your team leader. We have certainly enjoyed working with and getting to know so many veterans from all over the country. Your creative spirit will remain with us long after you leave. Good luck to everyone today, and thank you for letting us be a part of your celebration!

Hospitality

Mid-morning snacks will be available in the

Hospitality Room (1114) today, and then we'll see you all at the Art Exhibit and Stage Show. Be sure to stop by tomorrow for a free bag lunch before your departure.



Worship Services

An interfaith church service will be held this morning at 9:30 a.m. in the Badlands Room. Chaplain Herb Cleveland will deliver a message entitled, "Celebrating Veterans." Cleveland is a retired Army and VA Chaplain who served at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center and as Director of Chaplain Services in Washington, DC. Persons of all faiths are welcome!



Today's Menus

All meals, unless otherwise indicated, will be provided in the Rushmore Room, Convention Center I.

Meal hours for today are:

Brunch: 8 – 11 a.m.

Dinner: 7 p.m.

Sunday, October 22, 2006

Brunch

- Bacon Strips and Sausage, Scrambled Eggs
- Breakfast Potatoes, Buttermilk Biscuits
- Country Sausage Gravy
- Waffles with Warm Syrup, Strawberries and Whipped Cream
- Assortment of Breakfast Pastries to include Bagels, Caramel Rolls, Danish Pastries, Muffins and Breakfast Breads
- Orange Juice, Apple Juice and Tomato Juice
- Roasted Chicken, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy
- Steamed Green Beans
- Garden Salad & Assorted Dressing
- Milk (Soy Milk Available upon request)
- Oatmeal and Dry Cereal
- Individual Yogurts and Fresh Fruit

Dinner

Closing Ceremony

- Black Hills BBQ, Chef Carved Beef, Brats with Sauerkraut
- Hamburgers, Relish Tray, Soy Burgers
- Roasted Red Jacket Potatoes, Ranch Style Beans
- Cole Slaw and Potato Salad, Corn O'Brien
- Seasonal Fresh Fruit, Bread and Butter
- Assorted Fresh Baked Pies
- Coffee, Decaf and Tea



Thanks to all the veterans who have participated in the project this week – you have helped make history! Twenty-five interviews were recorded this week. If you weren't able to do it this time, we hope you have a chance to participate in this wonderful project in the future.



Sunday, October 22, 2006

8 — 11 a.m. Brunch at hotel — Rushmore Room
 9:30 a.m. Interfaith Service — Badlands Room
 10 a.m. — Noon Hospitality Room Open — Suite 1114
 10:30 a.m. Team leader meeting — Sheridan Room
 11 a.m. Team leaders meet with artists
 Noon Board buses and depart for Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
 12:30 — 1:45 p.m. Artists at art exhibit to discuss their work with audience members — Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
 2 — 4:45 p.m. Stage show performance at Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
 5:30 p.m. Depart for hotel
 7 p.m. Closing celebration dinner and remarks — Rushmore Room, CCI
 9:30 p.m. Entertainment and dancing at hotel — Rushmore Room

***Check departure schedule for flight information

Monday, October 23, 2006

4:30 — 9 a.m. Breakfast at hotel – Rushmore Room



High: 38° Low: 22°
partly cloudy, 10% chance of rain



Oct 16-22
Black Hills, South Dakota

Please check with your team leader or the posted schedule outside of the Washington Room for any changes or updates to your daily schedule.

8 — 11 a.m. Brunch at hotel — Rushmore Room
 9:30 a.m. Interfaith Service — Badlands Room
 10 a.m. — Noon Hospitality Room Open — Suite 1114
 10:30 a.m. Team leader meeting — Sheridan Room
 11 a.m. Team leaders meet with performers
 11:30 a.m. Depart for Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
 12:30 p.m. Performers into costume and makeup
 1:30 p.m. All performers meet in La Croix C for warm up and pep talk
 1:50 p.m. All performers on stage
 2 — 4:45 p.m. Stage show performance at Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
 5:30 p.m. Depart for hotel
 7 p.m. Closing celebration dinner and remarks – Rushmore Room, CCI
 9:30 p.m. Entertainment and dancing at hotel — Rushmore Room

***Check departure schedule for flight information

Monday, October 23, 2006

4:30 — 9 a.m. Breakfast at hotel – Rushmore Room

Cyber Stop

The Internet Café, sponsored by Hewlett-Packard Company, provides computers for participants in the Bear Butte Room, Convention Center I.

Hours of operation for today are: 7 – 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.