

ArtsGram

Monumental Expressions



Hosted by the VA Black Hills Health Care System



A Daily Publication of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

Thursday, October 19, 2006

Carving out a Piece of History Meet Original Mt. Rushmore Carver Nick Clifford

Tonight, there's a special treat in store for those having dinner at Carver's Café at Mt. Rushmore. Nick Clifford, one of the original Mt. Rushmore carvers, will be there to address Festival participants and answer questions about the famous monument.

Clifford, an 85-year-old Keystone, S.D., native began working on the mountain when he was just 17 years old. Clifford claims it was his talent for baseball that got him the job. Confused? Well, ask him to tell you the story later tonight.

Sculptors began carving Mt. Rushmore in 1927 and Clifford was one of 400 workers who helped to create this wonderful tribute to America's history. Growing up only three miles from the site, Mt. Rushmore was truly engrained in his life.

"Everyone I knew growing up worked on Rushmore," he said. "We worked eight hours a day, six days a week – and we loved it!"

Clifford worked on the mountain from 1938 until its completion in 1941, but he never really thought of himself as an artist. "I just don't see myself as a sculptor," he said. "I did more of the labor and engineering." (Others might strongly disagree. Many who have seen this amazing creation would certainly consider anyone who helped in its creation to be an artist.)

After the carving was completed, Clifford joined the Army Air Corps at age 20, working in ground communications in both England and Germany. He was discharged in 1946 and has been somewhat of an entrepreneur ever since.

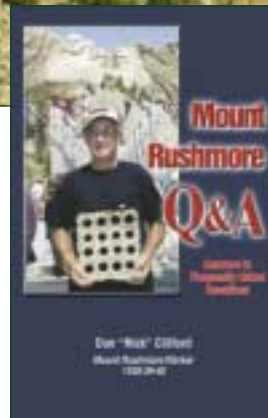
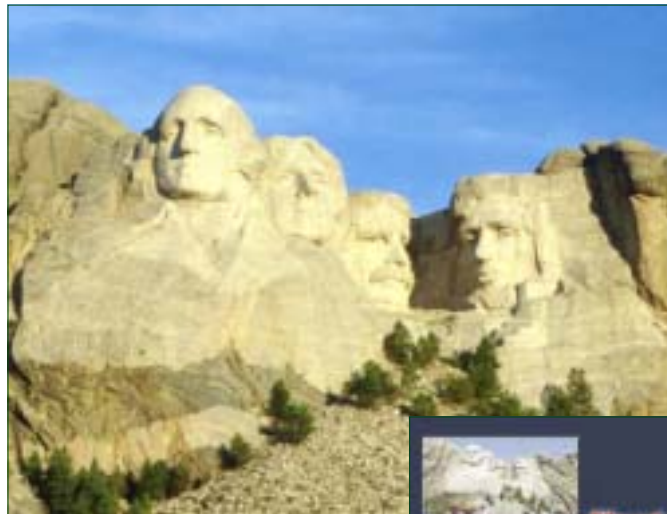
Clifford owned a dry cleaning shop for ten years and also worked in the hotel and restaurant business. He met his wife, Carolyn, while working at Sylvan Lake Resort and they were

married in 1974. Together, they started an ice cream and sandwich shop in Keystone and operated that business for six years.

It wasn't until 2000 that Clifford became involved with Mt. Rushmore again. The general manager of concessions found

out that Clifford was one of the original workers and still lived in the area. He asked Clifford to come speak with visitors and answer their questions. "At first, the general manager asked if he could pay me," Clifford recalls. "But Rushmore has been such an important part of my life that I couldn't possibly profit from sharing my experiences."

Carolyn diligently kept a journal of all the silly and interesting questions people asked her husband. After about three years, an author approached the couple wanting to write a book about Clifford and Mt. Rushmore. Instead, the Cliffords decided to write a book themselves, called "Mount Rushmore Q & A: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions." Eighty pages in length, the book contains more than 20 pictures and other fun facts about the mountain.



The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is proud to welcome Nick Clifford at this evening's dinner. While he has never spoken in front of a large group of veterans, he knows it will be a worthwhile assignment. "I don't think I'll have any problems speaking to this group. In fact, I'll fit right in with them," he said.



Presented by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Help Hospitalized Veterans and American Legion Auxiliary



Stage Notes

How To Sing Better – Instantly!

We have some wonderful singers here this week, but not all of us are equally blessed with this talent. Despite that, we all have to sing at some point, even if it's just a simple 'Happy Birthday.' Use these simple tips and techniques to improve your voice and your confidence.

1. Keep your arms slightly away from your body. Clasp your hands out in front of you or bring your arms to your sides and a bit forward, raising them about six inches in a flexible, relaxed fashion. This will allow your ribcage to fully expand and your lungs to fill to capacity. More air allows you to project your voice more strongly and clearly.

2. Keep your feet about shoulders' width apart. If you like, one foot can be further forward than the other. Make sure you're solidly balanced, but still flexible. Bend your knees slightly. If you must sing while sitting, make sure both feet are flat on the floor and you are sitting up straight, but not stiffly.



3. Relax! Tension destroys vocal tone. Try not to let your shoulders hunch up and keep your neck from

tensing. Don't force your chest out and up when you breathe in. This will actually constrict your air flow. Stay in motion, however slightly. This will relax your body and your tone will sound more natural. Try gently swaying from side to side with the rhythm. (You'll *look* better, too!)



4. When you inhale, push your stomach out. This will allow you to more completely fill your lungs. As you exhale, bring your stomach slowly in, using the muscles of your diaphragm (which is just under your ribcage) to control your notes.

5. If you have to hit a high note or you hear yourself singing flat (that is, your notes are a tiny bit too low), raise your arms a little higher and smile slightly. For very high notes, try closing your eyes and turning your face up slightly.

6. Conversely, if you start to sing sharp (a tiny bit too high), bring your arms down a little lower and open your mouth slightly wider by dropping your lower jaw. Don't dip your chin towards your neck though, as this will cause your air flow to become constricted and that will show up in your voice.

7. Enjoy yourself!

Jane Powell – Mistress of Ceremonies



There are many special moments for veterans attending the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Meeting Jane Powell, star of Hollywood's golden era and the Festival's stage show mistress of ceremonies, has to be one. Better yet is sharing the stage and actually working with this famous star of radio, movies, Broadway and television. This year marks Powell's eighth time serving as mistress of ceremonies for the Creative Arts Festival.

Jane Powell is known for her celebrity, but is also remembered for her kindness and professionalism. She will be available for photos on Saturday, October 21 from 9:30-11 a.m. in the Rushmore Room.

"Jane's interest and concern for veterans has always been apparent. She lends a sparkling star quality to the Festival event that makes the experience for all even more special," said Liz

Mackey, national director for the Festival. "We're so pleased that she enthusiastically lends her time and talents toward the success of the Festival."

Jane Powell came to Hollywood at the age of 14 from Portland, Oregon, where she had her own radio shows. She starred in 20 major MGM musicals, and many of the songs she introduced became standards. She has starred in every entertainment medium, written an autobiography, produced an exercise video, and appeared on the lecture circuit. She lives in Connecticut with her husband, Dick Moore, and enjoys gardening and cooking. Jane Powell has served as mistress of ceremonies of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in 1991, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005 and again this year.





Granite Carvings - Symbols of Freedom and Democracy



Within the majestic beauty of the Black Hills stand carved figures that tell a story – the story of our past – the story of America’s history. The granite sculptures hovering over the hills

include faces of four U.S. presidents and a Native American warrior. Over the decades, generations of visitors - over three million a year – marvel as they learn about the ideals of democracy and freedom represented by granite portraits of Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, and Crazy Horse, a great Native American leader whose courage and patriotism set him apart from all others. These five figures are symbols of America – symbols of freedom and democracy. They represent hope for people of all cultures and backgrounds.

Established in 1925, South Dakota’s Mount Rushmore National Memorial commemorates the first 150 years of American history. Between 1927 and 1941, Gutzon Borglum and 400 workers sculpted the 60-foot busts of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. Visitors can see a wide array of wildlife, big and small, as they wind their way through trails of granite peaks. Bicyclists and motorcycle riders enjoy the adventure of yesteryear as they climb steep and curvy roads, and remember and hear stories of days gone by.

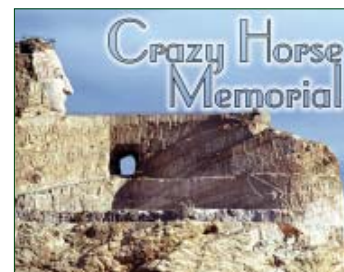


The Crazy Horse Memorial is a nonprofit cultural and educational humanitarian



project dedicated to the Native Americans of North America. The work on the memorial began in 1948 by sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski at the request of Native Americans. Korczak died in 1982, but his vision lives on through his wife, Ruth, and their family. The Memorial includes the Indian Museum of North America, the Native American Cultural Center, the sculptor’s studio, and a new 40,000-square-foot Orientation Center and theater. A coveted painting depicts Korcak’s detailed, long-range plans for Crazy Horse Memorial. The extraordinary painting, by Artist Gene Christopherson, is based on the 220-page master plan for Crazy Horse. In the foreground is the visitor complex as it appears today with more than 80 rooms – all of which started with Korczak’s army tent in 1947.

Today’s visit to Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse Mountain will give you a new understanding and love for our nation’s history and cultures, and an appreciation of why it is important to care for that legacy. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended.



Dinner at Mt. Rushmore

Dining at Carver’s Café on Mt. Rushmore is a unique experience. The dining hall, surrounded by glass, allows visitors to experience how the mountain lights glow in the night. A feeling of calm surrounds you as the Presidents come to life to form a protective cover over the land.

While dining, writer and former Mt. Rushmore worker Nick Clifford will answer questions about the making of this historical landmark. Clifford is known as a local expert, and

you are sure to be fascinated by some of his stories. You will also learn from a Mt. Rushmore ranger how the Presidents are lighted.

The weather can be unpredictable. Bring a jacket or wear warm comfortable clothing. The atmosphere is casual and the experience is sure to bring a perfect end to a perfect day. Enjoy!





Finding the Words to Say Thank you!

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) and the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) have demonstrated their passion and devotion to promoting the arts for America's veterans throughout the years. We are extremely grateful to all three Creative Arts Festival presenters, as well as our many civic and corporate sponsors, for continuing to help bring this inspiring display of talent to life.



VA has been supporting art therapy programs in its facilities for more than 20 years, and continuously recognizes the many health benefits of this important therapy. "Our talented veterans are shining examples of the healing power of the arts," said the Honorable R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "Many participants were introduced to the arts in the rehabilitation programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs." Dedicated therapists at VA medical centers throughout the country encourage veterans to participate in the national Festival each year. Some also serve in key advisory roles for the event, and many volunteer during the week as committee members and team leaders. Other VA employees and volunteers provide continuing support as well, both before the event and while we are here.

However, if not for the extraordinary help of HHV and ALA, the Creative Arts Festival would not be the spectacular event it is today.



HHV's involvement in creative arts therapy originated long before the Festival. In fact, it was 1970 when Roger Chapin, the organization's founder, saw a need to provide hospitalized Vietnam veterans with a creative outlet. Since then, HHV has distributed more than 20 million craft kits that have brightened and enriched the lives of so

many. The organization has been a proud presenter of the Creative Arts Festival for 13 years. "HHV believes the Festival provides a venue that is far reaching in therapeutic value for America's heroes," Chapin said. "It highlights veterans' abilities rather than their disabilities. I encourage the public to attend the Festival in Rapid City to experience the wonderful talents of America's veterans." HHV craft care specialists are on-site this week helping veterans realize their creative potential. Tomorrow, HHV will present its annual craft workshop in the Pactola Room from 7 – 9:30 p.m. Be sure to stop by and find out what new talents you may be hiding!



The 2006 Festival marks the American Legion Auxiliary's seventh year as a co-presenter. Each year, they bring countless dedicated volunteers who help with meals, staffing the hospitality suite and helping in the costume room. The Auxiliary also contributes significantly to the competition phase of the program by donating funds, materials and supplies, as well as helping with the judging of local competitions. "Veterans being treated in local VA facilities across our nation who enter this competitive arena benefit as part of their healing process, both physically and emotionally," said JoAnn Cronin, ALA's National President. "Support of the Festival has provided our organization with yet another opportunity to assist and honor our veterans."

Regardless of position or role, each of our three presenters work with the noblest of missions in mind – to give back to the men and women who have served our country so bravely. Thanks again to VA, HHV and ALA for continuing to inspire creativity and for making this year's Festival one to always remember.



Festival Fun Facts

Highlighting some of our medal winning artists and performers.

■ Third-time Festival participant, California native and Army veteran **Mike McCann**, of Redondo Beach, Calif., is being featured in an animated commercial for the ESPN Game Plan for DirecTV, promoting the fall football season. While his voice is unmistakable, the

producers chose to animate his face in the 30-second spot. (That "may be a good thing," McCann laughed!)

■ **Robert Sontag**, an Air Force veteran from San Diego, Calif., won first place in the national art competition in the metal model building kit category. Sontag had a special reason for looking forward to his trip to South Dakota – his great, great, great grandmother was from the same blood line as Chief Crazy Horse.





Photos from the Festival



Michael Cruse, Sr., and his wife Leta enjoy the Tuesday afternoon tour of the Journey Museum. Michael's piece from the 2005 Festival, "Dragon Slayer," won the attention of the World Organization of China Painters Museum and will be on display in the museum for one year. Congratulations, Michael!



Jackie Williams from New Haven, Ct., "tickles the ivories" and sings as he shares his winning talent on Tuesday.



(Left to right) Ed Hall and Marvin Hooper from Temple, Texas, share their rendition of train songs.



Gloria Tatum and Nick Storm from Oklahoma City share their dance version of "Cabaret."

Glen Moody and Matthew DeWein from Gainesville, Fla., otherwise known as "Hamhock and Slide," practice their original tune, "O'er Yonder" during the Tuesday morning rehearsals.



Monumental Expressions
from the Festival





Studio Notes

The Art of Leatherwork

Today's art workshop focuses on leatherwork. Here are a few tips we've discovered about this fascinating medium. It might interest you to know that basic leather craft projects don't require a lot of tools. Some of the items you'll need to for any project are listed in the following steps.

1. Make sure that you have a flat, stable surface on which to work. A rubber mat placed under your work will prevent the surface from being scarred and will also protect the blades of your cutting tools.

2. Measure out lines and curves onto leather with items such as a sturdy ruler and a French curve. Choose metal measuring tools. You can use the straight edges of these tools to create straight cut lines in your leather. Mark lines along the leather's surface with pencils and felt-tip pens.

3. Use items like leather bleach and leather deglazer to clean dirt, oil and residue from the surface of the leather before beginning any work.



4. Color your leather with leather dyes and paints. Paint, dye applicators, wool dawbers and paintbrushes can be found at any leathercraft store.

5. Cut out leather pieces with a razor knife and use paring tools such as edge bevelers and skives to remove thin layers from a piece of leather. Leather shears can be used to cut thinner pieces of leather.

6. Tool a piece of leather with a swivel knife, wood or rawhide mallet, and a variety of leather stamps. Decorative cuts are made with a swivel knife and then the mallet and stamps are used to create textures and depressed surfaces around those cuts. Stamps come in a variety of patterns.

7. Make perforations in your leather with an awl, a stitching awl (for holes that will be stitched through) and/or leather hole punches of various sizes. Use a rotary hole punch for easy, even hole placement.

8. Sew leather with leathercraft sewing needles, waxed linen thread and artificial sinew. Use the waxed linen thread on softer, thinner pieces of leather and use the artificial sinew on harder pieces. (The artificial sinew does not stretch and may cut into the stitching holes in soft pieces of leather.)



Leatherwork workshop

Traditional beading on traditionally prepared leather is in danger of becoming a lost art. Today's leatherwork workshop, led by Larry Belitz from Sioux Replications, will provide information and hands-on projects where individuals can learn how to bead onto traditionally tanned and smoked buckskin leather.



"Today's beadwork is mostly accomplished using commercially processed leather with plastic beads and nylon threading," said Belitz, whose work is displayed in museums around the country.

He adds, "This workshop will provide instruction and demonstration of the basic techniques and traditional patterns used. Colors and symbols will be from the traditional Lakota style."

The manner of beading for the Plains Indians was the lazy stitch, the technique demonstrated during the workshop. Also, sinew (instead of nylon) will be used to thread the projects together. Sinew is the traditional material used for stitching and comes from the back muscle threads of buffalo or deer. The beads used for this workshop are old, Italian glass beads brought over to America from the era of Christopher Columbus.



Projects available include beaded pouches, edge beading pouches, and beading faces of pouches in traditional Lakota style. Come by the Sheridan Room in Convention Center II from 9 a.m. till noon for this very special workshop.



F-Y-I



Meet with your team leader every morning (through Friday) at 8:30 a.m. at the designated location determined at Monday night's meeting. On Saturday, October 21, the team meetings will begin at 9 a.m. On Sunday, October 22, the meetings will begin at 11 a.m.

NVCAF Web site www.creativeartsfestival.org

Would you like your friends and family back home to see what you are doing this week? Tell them to log onto the Festival Web site to check out the daily editions of the *ArtsGram* (on the main home page) as well as individual news releases and photos, located on the "Participant Information" tab.

Medical Suite

The medical support team is located in Room 1702. Team members are available at all times at the hotel and on trips. This will be another eventful day with many activities. If you are going to the Crazy Horse Memorial and Mount Rushmore National Memorial, enjoy the views, but do so in a leisurely manner. Remember your sunscreen and drink plenty of fluids. Please contact your team leader if you have any health issues or concerns.



The Hospitality Room (Ramkota Room 1114) will be open today from 9 a.m. – 11 p.m. Take a break and join us for beverages, snacks and fellowship.

Today's Menus



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

Meal hours are as follows:

Breakfast: 7 – 8:30 a.m.

Lunch: Noon – 1 p.m.

Dinner: 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.

Thursday, October 19, 2006

Breakfast

Sliced Ham, Buttermilk Biscuits and Sausage Gravy
Western Scrambled Eggs with Diced Peppers & Onion
Breakfast Potatoes, Muffins, Caramel Rolls
Orange Juice, Apple Juice and Tomato Juice
Milk (Soy Milk Available upon request)
Oatmeal & Dry Cereal
Individual Yogurts & Fresh Fruit

Lunch

Down Home Picnic

Crisp Fried Chicken, Potato Salad
Taco Pasta Salad, Oven Roasted Red Jacket Potatoes
Green Beans, Fresh Vegetable Tray with Dip
Warm Biscuits and Butter

Dinner

Carver's Café at Mt. Rushmore

Buffalo Prime Rib, Roast Pork
Vegetarian Lasagna, Rice Pilaf
Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans
Tossed Garden Salad
Assorted Desserts



Participants may have their Veterans History Project (VHP) interviews recorded today from 8 a.m. – noon and from 1 – 5 pm. Interviews conclude on Saturday. Any veteran who wishes to record an interview, which will be sent to the Library of Congress, should do it soon!

Remember, this historic project honors America's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Regardless of branch or period of service, age, military career or experience, all veterans are invited to share it with our VHP program staff and help make history! Please go to the VHP interview room (Needles Room, Convention Center I). Veterans who are volunteers or employees are welcome to sign up as well.

Thanks to all the veterans who have already participated. Hours remain as listed through Saturday.



Thursday, October 19, 2006

7 — 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel — Rushmore Room

8 a.m. Team leaders meet with Katy Ryan — Sheridan Room

8:30 a.m. Team leaders meet with artists

9 a.m. — 11 p.m. Hospitality Room Open — Suite 1114

9 a.m. — Noon Art Workshop #2 — Leatherwork — Sheridan Room, CCII

Noon Lunch at hotel — Rushmore Room

12:45 p.m. Begin boarding buses

1 p.m. Depart for Crazy Horse Memorial

1:30 — 3:30 p.m. Tour Crazy Horse Memorial and Native American Cultural Center

3:30 p.m. Board buses and depart for Mount Rushmore

4 — 6 p.m. Tour Mount Rushmore

6 — 8 p.m. Dinner and Program at Carver's Café, Mount Rushmore

7 — 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel — Rushmore Room

8 a.m. Team leaders meet with Amy Kimbler — Badlands Room

8:30 a.m. Team leaders meet with performers

9 a.m. — 11 p.m. Hospitality Room Open — Suite 1114

9 — Noon Complete run-thru in show order including chorus numbers, no stopping — EVERYONE NEEDED — Washington Room

Noon Lunch at hotel — Rushmore Room

1 p.m. Begin boarding buses

1:15 p.m. Depart for Crazy Horse Memorial

1:45 — 3:30 p.m. Tour Crazy Horse Memorial and Native American Cultural Center

3:30 p.m. Board buses and depart for Mount Rushmore

4 — 6 p.m. Tour Mount Rushmore

6 — 8 p.m. Dinner and Program at Carver's Café, Mount Rushmore



High: 49° Low: 34°
40% chance of rain in afternoon.

Cyber Stop

An Internet Café, sponsored by Hewlett-Packard Company, will be available in the Bear Butte Room, Convention Center I. Computers will be available for participants to access the internet.

Hours of operation: Wednesday, October 17 through Sunday, October 21, 7 – 8:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 7 – 9:00 p.m. (except for Thursday and Sunday evenings).



Schedule legend:

CCI - Convention Center I
CCII - Convention Center II

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