

## WELCOME TO MIGHTY MINNESOTA!



Minnesota gets its name from the Dakota word *minisota*, meaning "water that reflects the sky." Approximately 10,000 years ago, glaciers more than one mile thick covered most of Minnesota. The melting of these glaciers created thousands of lakes, streams and rivers. Though state license plates proclaim that Minnesota is the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," the state actually has nearly 12,000 lakes (more than 10 acres each) totaling 4,967,510 acres! The seven-county metropolitan area has 949 lakes, of which 22 are located in the city of Minneapolis.

In 1858, Minnesota became the 32nd state. It is home to more than 4.9 million people, with more than half of its population residing in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. This state ranks as having the 21st highest population, and the Twin Cities are the eighth fastest-growing area in

the nation. The Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area is the fifteenth largest metropolitan statistical area in the United States.

The Twin Cities are rated eighth on the continent as an arts center according to "Places Rated Almanac." During fiscal year 2000, 2.3 million seats were sold by Twin Cities theaters – or 0.82 tickets per capita. The Twin Cities are second only to New York City in arts activities per capita. As a thriving center for the arts, Minneapolis

is a perfect location for hosting the 2002 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Minnesota is home to the nation's largest shopping and entertainment complex, the Mall of America, which opened in August 1992. Two world-class orchestras, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Now – enjoy your experience at the 2002 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in Mighty Minnesota!

### MINNEAPOLIS VAMC WELCOMES YOU!

It is a great thrill and honor to be your host during the 2002 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. We extend to you a hearty welcome and hope you'll fully enjoy your time in the Twin Cities. The exhaustive preparation for the this year's Creative Arts Festival culminates this week with

your extraordinary and talented performances. I want to thank the Minneapolis VA Medical Center employees and all of the volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make this week a memorable one for all.

**STEVEN P. KLEINGLASS**  
Medical Center Director

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR



### HITHERE!

A warm HELLO to you and welcome to an intense, but fun-filled week of preparation and performance! Here's the answers to some questions you may have:

### *What's going to happen?*

We are going to carefully prepare every part of the Festival show during our rehearsals and coaching sessions. Because we want to do our best when we perform for the audience, we will be working very hard. This coming week is planned to give us lots of time to get ready.

### *What's expected of me?*

1. Being on time for every rehearsal.
2. Working hard to improve my performance by following the directors' suggestions.
3. Practicing on my own.
4. Encouraging my fellow performers.
5. Staying cheerful (even if I feel tired!) during rehearsals.

### *What will I get out of this?*

1. Thrills and excitement by being part of a great show.
2. Being a better performer as experienced directors help me improve my skills.
3. Making new friends as I meet people from all over the U.S.
4. Getting great support as fellow performers tell me when I do well.
5. Pride, as I hear the audience applaud and my friends view the video of the show.

### *What's first?*

Tomorrow morning, you will perform your act and meet the other performers. This is an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other right from the start. I'm looking forward to meeting you as we begin our work together. It'll be a terrific experience!

*Paul Dieke*

## CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

The Creative Arts Festival Hometown News Program is now totally web-based. Through this, we generate an individual news release for any veteran who requested one, and make it available to local media. For any veteran who asked for a news release, they will be posted on the Festival web page toward the end of the week (see [www.va.gov/vetevent/caf/2002](http://www.va.gov/vetevent/caf/2002), under "Participant Information"). We'll also be taking digital photos of as many of you as possible, and hope to have the best photo of each veteran on the web site by Saturday. We will also provide one 4X6" print of that photo for you, as well as a copy of your personal news release.

The web-based Hometown News Program makes your information much more readily available to the media in your area. Unfortunately, this means that we can no longer provide the many duplicate prints from film as we did in the past, as all the photos are now digital.

We hope that you have brought along your cameras so you can ask your friends or Festival volunteers to take some photos of you rehearsing, performing, displaying your artwork, or attending Festival activities. Or, use that new disposable camera all participants received (and smile)!

## ARTISTIC STROKES

More than 30 participants are at the Festival this week who won first place in an artistic category. We have many activities scheduled for you, including workshops in digital design, pottery/clay and portrait drawing, as well as trips to Minnehaha Falls, Walker Art Center & Sculpture Gardens, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Tomorrow, you will go to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center (leaving at 8:45am) for an interactive session, where you will display your work and discuss the process used to create it. Welcome, all our artists!

## CONGRATS FROM NATIONAL DIRECTOR

*"You have set the stage for an incredible week..."*

Congratulations and welcome to all of the gold medal-winning veterans who are gathered here at the 2002 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in Minneapolis. You have come a long way since entering the local competition this past winter. Nearly 3,000 veterans from 101 VA facilities participated in this year's competition, and each of you are to be commended for your accomplishment in achieving first place in your specific category. Now you've all come together for a splendid and unforgettable week.

My most heartfelt appreciation to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center staff and volunteers, sponsors, and the community at large for the successful planning involved in hosting the 2002 Festival. You have set the stage for an incredible week of celebrating the creative talents of America's veterans, and provided the backdrop for the fulfillment of dreams.

**Liz Mackey**

*National Director,  
National Veterans Creative  
Arts Festival*