



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2006

VA Announces First Broadcast of Creative Arts Festival

WASHINGTON – Americans nationwide will have the opportunity to see the talents of veterans from across the nation this fall with the first syndicated television broadcast of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

The syndicated broadcast of the Festival, sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Help Hospitalized Veterans and the American Legion Auxiliary, is made possible through a partnership with South Dakota Public Broadcasting and the National Educational Telecommunications Association.



From left, Mike Lynch, Carol Van Kirk, Secretary Nicholson and Bob Bosse at National Press Club on Aug. 10

“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 the Honorable R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. “For the first time, Americans from coast to coast will be able to see

rehabilitative therapy in action.”

Nicholson was joined in the announcement by Mike Lynch, executive director of Help Hospitalized Veterans; Carol Van Kirk, national president of the American Legion Auxiliary; and Bob Bosse, director of television for South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

The 2006 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is being held in Rapid City, South Dakota beginning October 16 and will culminate in a live stage show of music, dance and drama Sunday, October 22.

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Under the terms of the partnership, VA will work 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 Public Broadcasting System stations nationwide. The target date for the broadcast on local PBS affiliates is the week of Veterans Day 2006.

“I cannot think of a more fitting Veterans Day tribute than the broadcast of this fine demonstration of talent by America’s veterans,” said Nicholson. “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.”

Approximately 130 veterans will exhibit their artwork or perform musical, dance, dramatic or original writing selections in a gala variety show. A professional orchestra will accompany the performance. All veterans invited to participate are selected winners of year-long, national fine arts talent competitions at VA medical facilities across the nation.

VA medical facilities incorporate creative arts into their recreation therapy programs. This annual competition recognizes the progress and recovery made through that therapy, and raises the visibility of the creative achievements of our nation’s veterans after disease, disability or life crisis.

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