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#### **(S.D.)-VA Black Hills To Hold Womens' Retreat**

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 02/20/2013 09:33 AM

(Sturgis)-VA Black Hills Health Care System will host a free, semi-annual Women Veterans' Retreat through the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Outpatient Treatment Program. The retreat will be held April 19-21, at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center, two miles east of Sturgis.

The retreat is for women Veterans of all eras, from all across the country, diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as well as female family members – wives, significant others, mothers, adult daughters, etc. – of male Veteran's diagnosed with PTSD.

The retreat will focus on Veterans' treatment and addresses psychological, physical, social and spiritual issues related to PTSD. The retreats provide a unique opportunity for women to learn more about the effects of war, as well as other types of trauma. The primary emphasis is to learn how to cope with the devastating effects PTSD can have on Veterans and family members' lives. The retreat program also encourages participants to examine problem areas in their lives and help them make healthy changes and choices. There will be a particular emphasis on developing healthier coping strategies and increasing one's social support network.

"The Women's Retreat, in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, seeks to help participants examine some of the basic questions in their lives," said the retreat coordinator, Cathy Edler. "Facilitators from VA volunteer their time to help participants build a community of people who are willing to take time to support each other. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the basis of their values and beliefs, as well as opportunities to identify short and long-term goals as a means of discovering or renewing inner resources."

The retreat is offered free of charge. All meals and lodging are provided at no cost to eligible participants through the generous donations of the Disabled American Veterans Charitable Trust, as well as other Veteran's service organizations and interested groups and individuals who want to support this beneficial program.

The retreat is held at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center, beginning at noon on Friday, April 19 and concludes at approximately 1 p.m. on Sunday, April 21.

Early registration is encouraged as participants must be pre-screened. To be screened and register, please contact the PTSD Outpatient Treatment Program at 720-7449 or [1-800-743-1070, extension 7449](tel:1-800-743-1070). Travel eligibility inquiries should be directed to 720-7103.

(Story courtesy of VA Black Hills)