



Veterans News And Views

HAPPY VETERANS DAY !

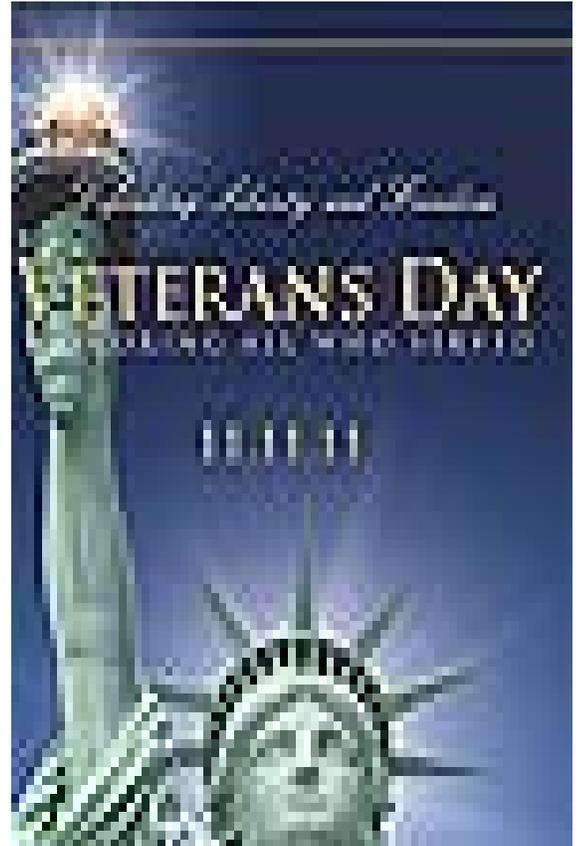
I hope that all of you are planning in attending a local Veterans' Day celebration.

Veterans Day is a time to not only reflect on the loss of our comrades, but also to celebrate the lives of all of our veterans here with us today.

It is a time to remind the non-veterans around us of not just our past sacrifices, but also our accomplishments, in and out of the military.

Less than 10% of the current population of the United State has served a single day in the military. You are unique!

Celebrate your uniqueness !!!



STARS AND STRIPES HONOR FLIGHT



To date, the organization has flown more than 1200 WWII veterans to Washington, D.C.

There is one more flight date scheduled for 2011, it will be on November 5. When we will again use 2 757s to get another 220 veterans to D.C.

Even after this tremendous effort, we have a waiting list that is rapidly approaching 400.

The Board, will meet again to determine/plan our focus going forward in to 2012.

To all of the Volunteers, Guardians and those who donated a HUGE THANK-YOU!!!

We could not do this with out your help!



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Iraq and Afghanistan



As we begin to wind down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we need to be ever mindful of the fact that we still have men and women deployed and in harm's way.

If history is any indicator, the general population, and sometimes our elected officials, seem to lose sight of that fact as hos-

tilities draw down.

While war is never a popular issue, at least this go-round, our troops have enjoyed the support of the majority of Americans, unlike what occurred to our troops who served in Korea and Vietnam.



We, as veterans, need to insure that our fellow citizens continue to appreciate the sacrifices our military personnel, and their families, make every day.

POST 9 / 11 GI BILL

The Post 9-11 GI Bill continues to undergo modifications.

The Post 9-11 GI Bill most closely resembles the GI Bill that went into effect following WWII.

The most recent changes include offering benefits to our Guard and Reserve members, which are very similar to our regular active-duty forces. This is a major recognition of the contributions made by our "citizen soldiers" who have borne a far larger share of the burden during the current conflicts than years past .

The Post 9-11 GI Bill includes:

Full tuition

Book Allowance

Housing allowance.

See the attached information for further details, or see the links on-line at:

http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/student_handouts/

VA MEDICAL SYSTEM NEWS

The VA Medical System remains open to many veterans. That's the "good" news.

We here in Wisconsin are fairing better than a number of other areas in the country.

As of this writing, there is only about a 3-5 month waiting list at the VAMC Milwaukee, while the branch clinic in Cleveland, WI is experiencing much longer waits.

Please remember, that if you do not have a service-connected disability, then you must meet the "Means Test" requirements to get enrolled in the system. Current Means

Test levels for a resident of Ozaukee County are:

Single Veteran \$37, 900

Married Veteran (no Children) \$43,300

The "cap" increases by about \$5,000 for each dependent child.

The VA has also added additional funding to increase these caps by about 10% for FY 2012.

Camp Lejuene Drinking Water Contamination

There has been much in the news in the recent past regarding the contamination in the soil surrounding a former dry cleaning service at Camp Lejuene. This soil contamination then migrated into the ground water on the base.

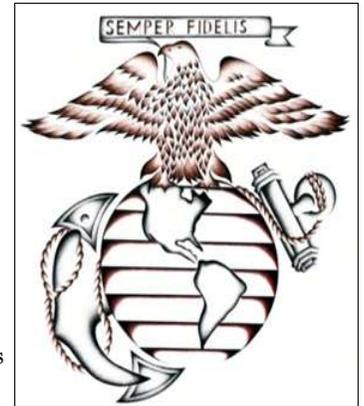
In order to insure you have the most accurate information, I have attached an article from the website, that lays out the story behind the problems with the water at Camp Lejuene.

It also explains why this is a concern, as well as some of the potential health problems related to the drinking water.

The VA has not been “registering” those veterans who were potentially exposed to the drinking water. But rather waiting for a veteran to file a claim before moving forward with “developing” the claim. There are no “presumptive” diseases yet recognized because of this potential exposure, so medical opinions will need to be

procured.

As noted in the attached, the primary concern, at this stage, relates to the potential birth defects in the children born to those Marine and Navy families stationed at Camp Lejuene, however, there are a number of other potential issues for the veterans themselves.



The investigation and studies are on-going, so I will attempt to keep you posted, as this moves forward.

Here is the URL for more information, and to register to get regular updates.

<https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater/index.aspx>

Property Tax Credit

In an effort to “clear the air” on this issue, here are the facts.

In order to qualify for a property tax credit the veteran must be 100% service connected disabled, or be in receipt of Individual Unemployability, or be the surviving (unremarried) spouse of a veteran that meets this criteria.

I have attached a “fact sheet” which outlines the requirements in a little more detail.

There is some legislation that could expand this criteria, but it has yet to move forward in the State Legisla-

ture.

In the current economic climate, I do not have a great deal of faith in this legislation being passed at this point in time, so, as always, I will keep you posted if they prove me wrong!



Hearing Aids, Eye Glasses and Dental Work

I frequently get asked about these benefits, and their availability from the VA.



If you do not have a service connected disability, that specifically relates to any of the above, the chances that you will receive these services from the VA is mighty slim!

There are certain exceptions given for the extremely low income, and those who’s VA doctor specifically recommends receive these areas of

care.

Those who WILL receive these services include those veterans rated at 100% permanent and totally disabled, as well as former POWs.

Otherwise, it may be a bit of an uphill battle.





County Veterans Service Office

OZAUKEE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

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Located in the Justice Center
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We're on the Web
www.co.ozaukee.wi.us

Serving Those Who Served America

Other links:

<http://www.va.gov>

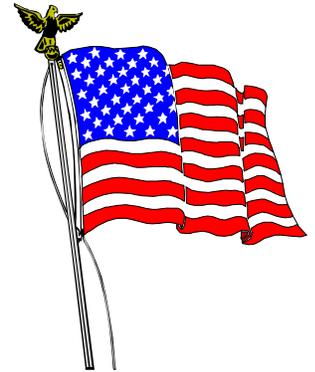
<http://www.wisvets.com>

VETERANS NEWS AND VIEWS

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In Memory Of Our Comrades



MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



A Parting Thought

I was at a loss, for a while, on my parting thoughts for this newsletter, until I got the enclosed letter of resignation from Earl Morse.

Earl was the “guiding light” for the Honor Flight Network.

It was Earl’s idea, initially, to start flying aging WWII veterans to see their memorial in D.C. before they all passed away.

Earl works at a VA facility in Ohio, and his contact with these aging veterans is where the kernel of the idea for the Honor Flight came from.

Earl, and some of his friends who were private pilots, began the program flying a few veterans at a time, in their own planes, out to D.C.

From that modest initial beginning, came the Honor Flight program, that as of the end of 2010 had flown 63,000 WWII veterans to Washington, at NOCOST to the veterans.

There are now “hubs” operating in 48 States, all doing the same mission.. In Wisconsin, we now have 5 “hubs”

operating in the state. While I cannot speak for the other hubs, we here at Stars and Stripes have flown nearly 1500 veterans from SE Wisconsin since our inaugural flight in November of 2008.

None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our volunteer Board and the literally hundreds of volunteers who have come forward to assist the Board.

Our corporate sponsors, children's' groups, veterans service organizations and every day citizens who have donated their time, and monies to this effort should all be applauded for their support of this effort.

Who ever said that no one man (or woman) couldn't impact so many lives?

A quote, from Will Rogers, that I borrowed from the Honor Flight network home page, kinda says it all.

“ We can't all be heroes, some of us have to stand on the curb and clap as they go by.”

See you around the County!

Ken

