



# Pottawattamie Commission of Veteran Affairs UPDATES

November 2007

Article from the Associated Press:

Complaints about religious content have led to a ban on flag-folding recitations by Veterans Administration employees and volunteers at all national cemeteries. At thousands of military burials, VA volunteers have folded the American flag 13 times and recited the significance of each fold to survivors. The 11th fold glorifies "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." The 12th glorifies "God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost." Citing a need for uniformity, the National Cemetery Administration has prohibited unpaid volunteers as well as employees from conducting the recital at all 125 national cemeteries.



## VA Clarifies Policy on Flag-Folding Recitations "13-Fold" Ceremony, Other Scripts Approved

WASHINGTON -- To ensure burial services at the 125 national cemeteries operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reflect the wishes of veterans and their families, VA officials have clarified the Department's policy about recitations made while the U.S. flag is folded at the gravesite of a veteran.

"Honoring the burial wishes of veterans is one of the highest commitments for the men and women of VA," said William F. Tuerk, VA's Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs. "A family may request the recitation of words to accompany the meaningful presentation of the American flag as we honor the dedication and sacrifice of their loved ones."

Traditional gravesite military funeral honors include the silent folding and presentation of an American flag, a 21-gun rifle salute, and the playing of "Taps."

The clarification includes the following:

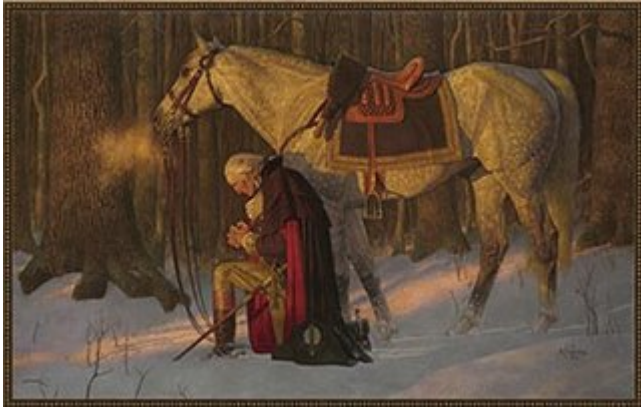
- Volunteer honor guards are authorized to read the so-called "13-fold" flag recitation or any comparable script;
- Survivors of the deceased need to provide material and request it be read by the volunteer honor guards; and
- Volunteer honor guards will accept requests for recitations that reflect any or no religious traditions, on an equal basis.

Veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker. A copy of the script is attached.

**Our flag is our national ensign, pure and simple, behold it! Listen to it! Every star has a tongue, every stripe is articulate.**

--Robert C. Winthrop (1809-1894), Senator from Massachusetts

When the U.S. flag is folded at a military funeral it is folded thirteen times. At each fold the following is said to explain each fold.



1. The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.
2. The second fold is a symbol of our belief in the eternal life.
3. The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
4. The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we

turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

5. The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

6. The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands one nation under God indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

7. The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

8. The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom if flies on mother's day.

9. The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.

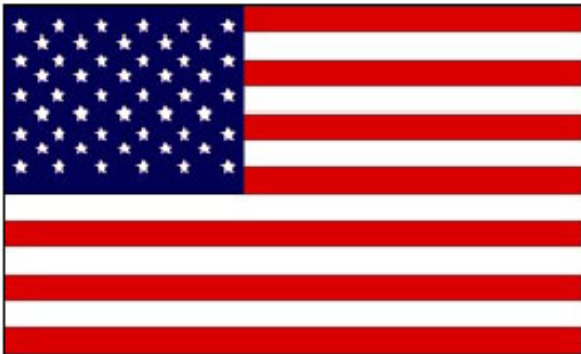
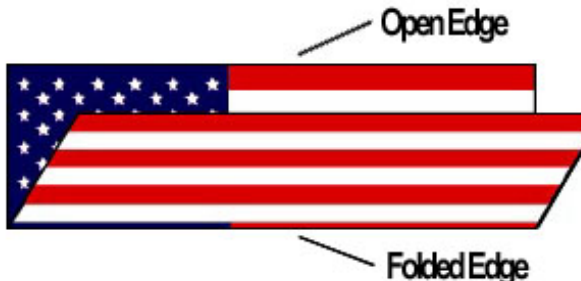
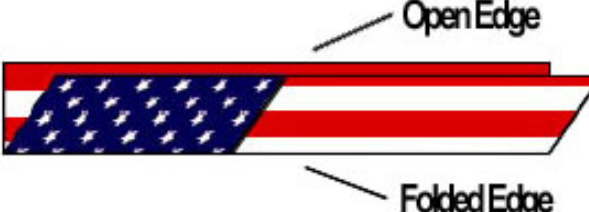
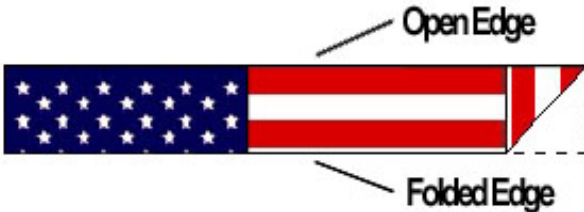



10. The tenth fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

11. The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

12. The twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.

13. When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God we Trust."

# Correct Method of Folding the United States Flag

Start		
Step 1		Fold the lower striped section of the flag over the blue field.
Step 2		Folded edge is then folded over to meet the open edge.
Step 3		A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.
Step 4		Outer point is then turned inward parallel with the open edge to form a second triangle.
Step 5		Triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the flag is folded in the triangular shape with only the blue field visible.
Completed		

## Veterans Day, 2007

A Proclamation By the President of the United States of America



Throughout our history, America has been protected by patriots who cherished liberty and made great sacrifices to advance the cause of freedom. The brave members of the United States Armed Forces have answered the call to serve our Nation, ready to give all for their country. On Veterans Day, we honor these extraordinary Americans for their service and sacrifice, and we pay tribute to the legacy of freedom and peace that they have given our great Nation.

In times of war and of peace, our men and women in uniform stepped forward to defend their fellow citizens and the country they love. They shouldered great responsibility and lived up to the highest standards of duty and honor. Our veterans held fast against determined and ruthless enemies and helped save the world from tyranny and terror. They ensured that America remained what our founders meant her to be: a light to the nations, spreading the good news of human freedom to the darkest corners of the earth.

Like the heroes before them, today a new generation of men and women are fighting for freedom around the globe. Their determination, courage, and sacrifice are laying the foundation for a more secure and peaceful world.

Veterans Day is dedicated to the extraordinary Americans who protected our freedom in years past, and to those who protect it today. They represent the very best of our Nation. Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, and Coast Guardsman has earned the lasting gratitude of the American people, and their service and sacrifice will be remembered forever. In the words of Abraham Lincoln: ". . . let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the Nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle . . ." On this Veterans Day, I ask all Americans to express their appreciation to our Nation's veterans.

With respect for and in recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor our Nation's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2007, as Veterans Day and urge all Americans to observe November 11 through November 17, 2007, as National Veterans Awareness Week. I encourage all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through ceremonies and prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to support and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with commemorative expressions and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

## **Fact Sheet: Lt. Gen. James B. Peake (Ret.), M.D.: The Best Choice for Our Nation's Veterans**

*President Bush To Nominate Former Army Surgeon General With Lifetime Of Military Medical Experience To Serve As VA Secretary*

**Today, 10/30/07 President Bush announced his intention to nominate Lieutenant General James B. Peake (Ret.), M.D., to serve as our Nation's Secretary of Veterans Affairs.** Dr. Peake is a highly decorated veteran who has dedicated his life to caring for the wounded. As he said in remarks praising senior noncommissioned officers before his 2004 Army retirement: "All my life I've been with Army medicine. My father was a medical services officer, and my mother was an Army nurse." His distinguished military career began in 1966 with service as an infantry officer in Vietnam, for which he received the Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster for wounds sustained in battle. He retired from the Army in 2004, following service as lead commander in several medical posts, including four years as the U.S. Army Surgeon General.

### **Dr. Peake's Career Spans Over 40 Years In The Field Of Military Medicine, During Which Time He Helped Develop Many Of Today's Lifesaving Battlefield Medical Techniques**

**Dr. Peake was awarded the Silver Star, a Bronze Star with 'V' device and oak leaf cluster, and Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster for his service in Vietnam as a platoon leader with the 101st Airborne Division.**

- **Dr. Peake was wounded twice in battle and received his acceptance letter to Cornell University Medical College while in the hospital recovering from injury.** He attended medical school through an Army scholarship and then returned to the Army for his medical internships and residencies.
- **As Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI) noted, Dr. Peake's "time as an infantry officer gave [him] a unique warrior's perspective on how our wounded should be cared for."** (Committee On Appropriations, Subcommittee On Defense, Hearing, U.S. Senate, 4/8/04)

**From 2000 to 2004, Dr. Peake served as the 40th Surgeon General of the United States Army.** In this position, he commanded 50,000 medical personnel and 187 army medical facilities worldwide with an operating budget of almost \$5 billion.

**Dr. Peake was also commander in several medical posts, and is credited with improving the training and techniques of the Army medical force.** Notably, Dr. Peake served as Commanding General of the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School – the largest medical training facility in the world, with over 30,000 students.

- **Military.com's Tom Philpott:** "[I]mproved training, now being used to great effect in Iraq and Afghanistan, was largely the vision of retired Lt. Gen. James Peake ... in the late 1990s [as Commanding General of the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School] and during his tour as Army surgeon general from 2000 through 2004." (Tom Philpott, "Military Update," *The Honolulu Advertiser*, 11/14/05)

**Dr. Peake has been honored with the Order of Military Medical Merit; the "A" Professional Designator; and the Medallion, Surgeon General of the United States.** His awards and decorations also include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and an Air Medal. Dr. Peake wears the Combat Infantryman Badge.

### **Dr. Peake's Private Sector Experience Managing Medical Examinations For Veterans And Separating Soldiers Further Qualifies Him To Serve As VA Secretary**

**Dr. Peake now serves as the Chief Medical Director and Chief Operating Officer of QTC Management, Inc.** QTC serves veterans and separating soldiers by providing timely medical examination and electronic medical record services to help government agencies manage medical data and information in a cost-effective manner.

**From 2004 to 2006, Dr. Peake was the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Project HOPE, a non-profit international health foundation with offices and programs in more than 30 different countries on five continents.** While at Project HOPE, Dr. Peake helped to orchestrate the use of civilian volunteers aboard the Navy Hospital Ship Mercy as it responded to the tsunami in Indonesia and aboard the Hospital Ship Comfort as part of the Hurricane Katrina response.

110th CONGRESS

1<sup>st</sup> Session

**S. RES. 357**

Designating the week of November 11 through November 17, 2007, as “National Veterans Awareness Week” to emphasize the need to develop educational programs regarding the contributions of veterans to the country.

**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES**

**October 26, 2007**

**Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. CASEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. DODD, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to**

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**RESOLUTION**

Designating the week of November 11 through November 17, 2007, as “National Veterans Awareness Week” to emphasize the need to develop educational programs regarding the contributions of veterans to the country.

**Whereas** tens of millions of Americans have served in the Armed Forces of the United States during the past century;

**Whereas** hundreds of thousands of Americans have given their lives while serving in the Armed Forces during the past century;

**Whereas** the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by the people of the United States;

**Whereas** the advent of the all-volunteer Armed Forces has resulted in a sharp decline in the number of individuals and families who have had any personal connection with the Armed Forces;

**Whereas** this reduction in familiarity with the Armed Forces has resulted in a marked decrease in the awareness by young people of the nature and importance of the accomplishments of those who have served in the Armed Forces, despite the current educational efforts of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the veterans service organizations;

**Whereas** the system of civilian control of the Armed Forces makes it essential that the future leaders of the Nation understand the history of military action and the contributions and sacrifices of those who conduct such actions; and

**Whereas** in each of the years 2000 through 2006 the Senate has recognized the need to increase the understanding of the contributions of veterans among school-aged children by approving a resolution recognizing the week containing Veterans Day as “National Veterans Awareness Week”: Now, therefore, be it

**Resolved,** That the Senate —

- (1) designates the week of November 11 through November 17, 2007, as “National Veterans Awareness Week” for the purpose of emphasizing educational efforts directed at elementary and secondary school students concerning the contributions and sacrifices of veterans; and
- (2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Veterans Awareness Week with appropriate educational activities.

## The Retiree Account Statement



Retired pay is administered by Retired Pay Operations, DFAS – Cleveland Center, PO Box 99191, Cleveland, OH 44199-1126.

Retired Pay Operations will mail a **Retiree Account Statement (RAS)** when an account is established. Revised RASs are sent only when a change occurs in retired pay.

To make changes in retired pay, Retired Pay Operations should be advised before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month preceding the month of payment. Changes received after the 10<sup>th</sup> may not be made until the following month. All change requests must contain the retiree's signature and Social Security Number, unless you choose to manage your retirement pay through the myPay system online.

## The myPay System

myPay offers faster enhanced services, security, accessibility and reliability to all customers of DFAS worldwide. MyPay is only for retirees and annuitants that receive their pay through DFAS, in other words myPay is not available to Coast Guard, NOAA, and USPHS retirees.

With myPay, you can:

- View, print, and save annuitant account statement
- View, print, and save tax statements
- Change federal and state tax withholdings
- Update bank account and electronic fund transfer information
- Manage allotments
- Make address changes
- Manage U.S. Savings Bonds
- Control Thrift Savings Plan Enrollment
- View, print, and save retiree account statement
- Provide report of existence
- Update certificate of eligibility
- Turn off hard-copy W2 tax statements

Visit the myPay website to learn more. <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

Retired service members who waive all retired pay in favor of VA compensation will be paid by VA. Retired service members who waive a part of their retired pay to receive an equal amount of VA compensation will receive monthly payments from both VA and Retired Pay Operations.

## Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)

- If you are a service member, retiree, or dependent, DEERS registration is the key to getting your TRICARE benefits eligibility established. DEERS is a computerized database of military sponsors, families and others worldwide who are entitled under the law to TRICARE benefits

### ***Registration in DEERS***

Active-duty and retired service members are automatically registered in DEERS, but they must take action to register their family members and ensure they're correctly entered into the database. Mistakes in the DEERS database can cause problems with TRICARE claims, so it is critical to maintain your DEERS information.

## **Verifying and Updating DEERS Information**

You can verify your DEERS information by contacting your regional TRICARE managed care support contractor, your local TRICARE service center or the nearest uniformed services personnel office (ID card facility). Sponsors or registered family members may make address changes, however, only the sponsor can add or delete a family member from DEERS, and proper documents are required such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree and/or birth certificate. To update your DEERS information:

- Visit your local uniformed services personnel office or contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office (DSO) at 1-800-538-9552. You can find the nearest uniformed services personnel office at: <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>.
- Fax address changes to DEERS at 1-831-655-8317.
- Mail the address change to the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office, ATTN: COA, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771.
- Go online to Tricare to update your information: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/deers/>.

### **Things to Keep in Mind:**

- Each family member's eligibility record must be updated separately when changes occur.
- Any changes that impact you or your family (e.g., marriage, birth, divorce, death) need to be reported to DEERS so that eligibility can start or stop under DoD and Service guidance.
  - If you are active duty and re-enlist, separate, retire, or move, make sure your information gets updated in DEERS as soon as possible. If you do not, you and your family might experience a break in eligibility, which means a break in health care coverage.
- Once you retire, you need to make sure DEERS reflects your change from active duty to retiree status

11/07/2007

## **Scouts to help with collection for troops**

Nicole Weis

Local Boy Scouts will partner with Soldier's Angels, a nonprofit, volunteer-run organization dedicated to sending cards and care packages to members of the military, to collect donations at Mall of the Bluffs, 1751 Madison Ave., this Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Requested travel size items include shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, shaving supplies and foot powder.

Acceptable snacks include beef jerky, water flavor packets, cookies, nuts and trail mix. No chocolate is allowed.

The items must be able to fit inside a flat rate box mailer, so travel or trial size items are recommended. The packages will be sent to deployed troops from Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue by Thanksgiving to ensure delivery by Christmas.

Soldier's Angels' mission is to provide aid and comfort to the military and its families. Patti Patton-Bader founded the program and the Web site, [www.soldiersangels.org](http://www.soldiersangels.org), in 2003 after her son wrote her from Iraq expressing his concern for soldiers who weren't receiving mail from home.

Since then, Soldiers Angels has sent more than 100,000 packages and numerous letters to troops. The organization has about 150 Angel volunteers statewide in Iowa and Nebraska.

Trailblazer is one of 13 districts with the Mid-America Council helping with this project. A Council Bluffs district, it serves 1,548 youth in 55 units in Pottawattamie, Mills and Fremont counties.

### **Suicide Prevention Awareness**

Suicide is the 11th most frequent cause of death in the US: someone dies from suicide every 16 minutes. Suicidal ideas and attempts to harm oneself are the result of problems that may seem like they can't be fixed. Together, Vet Centers and VA Medical Centers stand ready to reach out and help veterans at risk for suicide. Seek professional help...Call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention hotline and indicate you are a veteran. You'll be immediately connected to VA suicide prevention and mental health professionals. We can help-- If you feel you are in Crisis--Call the Suicide hotline (1-800-273-TALK), your local VA Medical Center 402-346-8800 ext 4944 or Vet Center (402-346-6735) today!

### **Suicide is not the answer**

Are you, or someone you love, at risk of suicide? Get help if you notice any of the following:

- Talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Trying to get pills, guns, or other ways to harm oneself
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Hopelessness
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
- Acting in a reckless or risky way
- Feeling trapped, like there's no way out
- Saying or feeling there's no reason for living

### **Returning from War**

The newest patients to the VA have been returning combat soldiers, men and women who served in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. (OEF/OIF). In a recent study, Dr. Karen Seal and colleagues at the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center and USC, reviewed records for over 100,000 veterans, who separated from active duty between 2001-2005 and sought care from VA medical facilities. The most common combination of diagnoses found was post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. Young soldiers were three times as likely as those over 40 to be diagnosed with PTSD and/or another mental health disorder. Most mental health problems were first identified during visits with primary care doctors, not with mental health professionals.

Getting help early can prevent PTSD and other problems from becoming chronic. VA is expanding counseling and mental health services to meet the needs of the returning veterans and provide early treatment. For more information on PTSD and its treatment, please visit the [National Center for PTSD](#).

### **Bush Signs Suicide Bill Named For Iowa Soldier**

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) November 6 -- President Bush has signed the Joshua Omvig Suicide Prevention Bill, providing improved screening and treatment for at-risk veterans. The law is named after Joshua Omvig, a 22-year-old soldier from Davenport, who committed suicide in December 2005 after an 11-month deployment from Iraq.

The legislation directs the federal government to develop a comprehensive program aimed at reducing suicide among veterans.

Mandatory training for Veterans Affairs staff would be put in place, and veterans would be offered mental health screening and referrals, at their request, for counseling and treatment.

Mental health care would be available on a 24-hour basis, including a toll-free hot line, and additional research would be conducted into suicide prevention among veterans, including those who have experienced sexual trauma in the service.

Family outreach and peer counseling is encouraged under the legislation, with an emphasis on removing the stigma associated with mental illness and promoting skills for veterans in dealing with mental illness. The new law came in the wake of growing number of veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. Veterans Health Administration mental health officials estimate as many as 5,000 veterans a year commit suicide.



Darlene McMartin, President of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, INC. (NACVSO) and Administrator of the Pottawattamie County Commission of Veteran, Patrick Palmersheim, Director of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, and Elizabeth Ledvina, Director of Tama County Commission of Veteran Affairs and newly elected President of the Iowa Association of County Commissioners of Veterans Affairs (IACCVA).



The IVC is centrally located and runs along Interstate 80 west of Des Moines in Dallas County near the community of Van Meter. Exit I-80 at the Van Meter Exit (Exit 113) and head south ("R" Avenue). The cemetery entrance will be easily identified just southeast of the Interstate. A temporary sign now marks the location of the "Future Home of the Iowa Veterans Cemetery." A current fundraising campaign will fund a magnificent wall strikingly announcing to I-80 travelers heading east or west that at this site lowans are proudly *honoring those who served*. The wall is 7' tall and angles east and west approximately 60' from the end of each wing to the center of the front arch. It is constructed with stone. Black metal lettering boldly announces the cemetery's presence. It will be illuminated at night.



On Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, the Dallas County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution to rename the county road that provides access to the cemetery. The roads name was changed from R Avenue to Veterans Memorial Drive. This new name will be a fitting tribute to the men and women interred at the cemetery and will provide an additional remembrance for those visiting the facility.

*Pictured left to right, Supervisor Mark Hanson, Supervisor Bob Ockerman, Supervisor Brad Golightly, and Cemetery Director Steve Young.*

As of October 22, the Iowa Veterans Cemetery has 22 cremated remains awaiting interment and 295 approved applications.

## New Veteran License Plates

The 2007 legislature created seven new license plates, including a Gold Star plate and plates for the recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, the Air Force Cross, the Soldier's Medal, the Navy and Marine Corp Cross, or the Airman's Medal. These plates have been designed by the Department of Transportation and will be available beginning January 1, 2008. The plates will cost \$25 with an annual renewal fee of \$5. The plate fees will be placed in the Veterans License Fee Fund. ~

## Vietnam Conflict Veterans Bonus

In 2007 the Iowa legislature passed Senate File 578 "Vietnam Conflict Veterans Bonus". It will cover the period from July 1, 1973 to May 31, 1975 for those individuals whose time of service in the U.S. military fall between that period of time and were from Iowa prior to going into the service.

- **2008 COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT:**

The Social Security Administration announced the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective 12-01-2007 will be 2.3%. VA compensation and pension rates will be increased by the same amount, effective 12-01-2007. The increase will show up in the 12-31-2007 payments for December 2007.

- **28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games: "Quest for the Best"**

Friday, July 25, 2008 – Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Each year more than 500 novice and experienced athletes meet for a week of archery, swimming, weightlifting, basketball, quad rugby and more. It's the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, the largest annual wheelchair sports competition of its kind in the world.

Throughout the week, veterans realize their abilities and potential while enjoying the spirit of healthy activity and fellowship. PVA and the Department of Veterans Affairs have co-presented the Games since 1985.

In addition, you can visit the Disabled Sports, Recreation and Fitness Expo that runs concurrently with the games. For Games Questions: Doug Beckley 800-424-8200, ext. 747 202-416-7622 TTY douglasb@pva.org or check out the website at: [www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org)

**When you are making out your Christmas card list this year, please include the following:**

**A Recovering American soldier  
c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center  
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20307-5001**

# Office Locations And Hours

Pottawattamie County Commission of Veterans Affairs  
223 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Court House Annex  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501  
712-328-5797 FAX 712-328-5726 e-mail: [veterans@pottcounty.com](mailto:veterans@pottcounty.com)  
Monday –Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 pm closed 12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Avoca Court House Tuesdays 8:00 am – 4:00pm

**Commissioners:**

**Andrew Trautman, Chairman**  
**Michael Carter, Secretary**  
**Phillip Jacobs, Member**

**Staff:**

**Darlene McMartin, B. S.W., Administrator**  
**Peggy Becker, Case Worker III**  
**Lori Swisher, Case Worker I**  
**Michael Grap, Clerk II**  
**Pamela Wilke, Receptionist**

**The staff of the Veterans Service can assist you with the following subjects:**

- **Compensation or Pension**
- **Disability Retirement**
- **Death Indemnity Compensation**
- **Appeal to Board of Veterans Appeal**
- **Hospital and Outpatient Benefits**
- **State of Iowa Benefits**
- **Educational Benefits**
- **Vocational Benefits**
- **Debt Waivers**
- **Obtaining Lost Military Records**
- **Review of Military Discharge**
- **Claims for Insurance Payments**
- **Burial Allowance**