

The Dane County Veteran

May 2008

Increased access to VA health care

From VA Health Care Fact Sheet 16-4
Dan Connery, Assistant Veterans Service Officer

On January 28, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 was signed into law. One section of this document increases access to VA health care for new combat veterans. Prior to the change, veterans had a 2-year window to apply for enrollment into the VA Health Care System regardless of their income status. This window has now been increased to 5 years!

- Veterans who served in a combat theater are eligible for entry into the VA Health Care System for 5 years post separation from their qualifying active duty period if they were separated from active duty on or after January 28, 2003.
- Those separated from a qualifying active duty period before January 28, 2003, who apply for VA health care access on or after January 28, 2008, are eligible to apply for this enhanced benefit until January 27, 2011.

Qualifying combat-veterans who were previously denied entry into the VA Health Care System due to being outside of the old 2-year window are encouraged to reapply.

Access to VA health care is available to non-combat veterans as well; however, access is not guaranteed. In general, all non-combat veterans without compensable VA service-connected disabilities are subject to having their income scrutinized. As a result, income that is too high often becomes a barrier to receiving VA health care benefits.



VA hospital

I highly recommend that all combat veterans who meet the above criteria apply for their VA health care benefits during their enhanced eligibility period. All non-combat veterans who may qualify for medical care are encouraged to apply as well. For assistance with your enrollment application, please call 266-4158 for an appointment with the Dane County Veterans Service Office.

Lori Redepenning joins Dane County Veterans Services

Lori Redepenning joined the County Veterans Service Office support staff on March 17, 2008. After spending 18 plus years in the Dane County Circuit Court system, she opted for a position that better suited her interests. She and her husband, Bill, have been involved with the American Legion in Stoughton for 10 years. Lori says, "I'm hoping the knowledge I learn at this new position will be of value to the members of our Post and Unit, as well as the satisfaction of being able to help the veterans that enter our office." Outside of work she also enjoys gardening and quilting. Welcome aboard Lori!



Redepenning

Memorial Day, 2008

“Honor deceased veterans by serving living veterans”

by Michael Jackson, Dane County Veterans Service Officer

I have often heard the theme “Honor the dead (veterans) by servicing the living (veterans).” I attended the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital, Madison Wisconsin, annual volunteer recognition luncheon on April 23, 2008, and was very impressed with the volunteers who put that theme to



Marshman

practice. If those individuals were salaried, the number of hours they volunteered in 2007 would represent over \$1.5 million.

It's worth noting that former Veterans Service Commissioner Akira Toki has been a volunteer there for 57 years. His wife, ^{Jackson}Mary, has served for 50 years, a combined total of 107 years! Both received a new award this year – Half Century Award plaque.

Current Commissioners Marjorie Marshman (Veterans Service Commission Vice-Chair) was honored with a 20-year award plaque, and Lyla Drewes (member of VA Voluntary Services Committee) received the 2,500 hour award pin. Both Lyla and Marge are also very instrumental in our office monthly outreach efforts at the VA Hospital here.

Each of these veterans are either serving, or have served, as members of the Madison Veterans Firing Squad. To borrow a phrase from a CVSO colleague, “I am busting-button proud” of you folks and all the other volunteers, many of whom I know. Congratulations and I salute you!



VA dental care window now 180 days

From VA Health Care Fact Sheet 164-3

Dan Connery, Assistant Veterans Service Officer

Effective January 28, 2008, all veterans who served on active duty for at least 90 days are eligible to receive one-time dental treatment through the VA for 180 days after separation from active duty. Your DD214 must show that you did not receive dental care within the 90-day period prior to separation. If you meet all of the necessary requirements, you must

enroll into the VA Health Care System within 180 days after separation from your qualifying period of active duty to be eligible for dental service.

For assistance with your enrollment application, please call 266-4158 for an appointment with the Dane County Veterans Service Office.

Economic stimulus payments for recipients of veterans benefits

By Chris Scoville, Asst CVSO, Dane County from IRS.gov

For people receiving benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for compensation, pension or survivors' benefits, the IRS and Treasury will be working closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs along with beneficiary organizations to ensure that all eligible individuals know what to do to receive a stimulus payment.

Normally, certain veterans' payments are not subject to income tax. However, the economic stimulus law passed in February, 2008, contains a special provision allowing recipients of certain veterans' benefits to count those benefits toward the qualifying income requirement of \$3,000 and thereby qualify for the stimulus payment. For purposes of meeting the qualifying income requirement, the following benefits need to be reported in any combination on Line 14a of the Form 1040A or Line 20a of Form 1040:

- The sum of veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors' benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2007. People are allowed to estimate their annual benefit by taking

their monthly annual veterans' benefit, multiplying it by the number of months during the year they received benefits, and entering the number on Line 20a of Form 1040 or Line 14a of the Form 1040A.

- People should note that Line 14a of the Form 1040A and Line 20a of Form 1040 are designated for Social Security. However, these lines should also be used to include any veterans' benefits.

Basic Eligibility Requirements. Individuals or families must have at least \$3,000 in qualifying income, which can be income from or in combination with Social Security benefits, Veterans Affairs benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits or earned income.

- People must have valid Social Security numbers.
- People cannot be claimed as dependents or eligible to be claimed as dependents on another's tax return.
- The payment does not have to be declared as income for 2008.

VA's suicide hot line begins operations

Excerpt from Waukesha County's "The Navigator"

WASHINGTON - To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun operation of a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans.

"Veterans need to know these VA professionals are literally a phone call away," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. "All service members who experience the stresses of combat can have wounds on their minds as well as their bodies. Veterans should see mental health services as another

benefit they have earned, which the men and women of VA are honored to provide."

The toll-free hot line number is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). VA's hot line will be staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, N.Y. They will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental health providers to help callers. To operate the national hot line, VA is partnering with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



Veterans Memorial Gardens at the Alliant Energy Center

MEMORIAL DAY ACTIVITIES

Forest Hill Cemetery

Speedway Rd. and Regent St., Madison.

8:00 – Assembly at Soldiers’ Rest. Organized by VFW Post 1318.

8:10– Service at Soldiers’ Rest. Organized by Madison Veterans Council.

8:30– Service at Union Rest.
Conducted by The Sons of the Union Veterans & its auxiliary.

8:50– Service at Confederate Rest. Organized by the 61st Georgia Infantry.

State Capitol Building – State Street (Rain Location 1st Floor Rotunda)

9:30 – Band Concert

10:00–Memorial Service. Posting of the Colors, National Anthem, Pledge of Allegiance, invocation. Introduction of Honored Guests, General Logan’s Memorial Day Proclamation; Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. Choir, Speakers, Rose Ceremony, Conclusion. Rifle Salute, Buglers, Benediction. Organized by Madison Veterans Council.



Naval & Marine Reserve Center

1430 Wright St. near and north of East Washington Ave., Madison.

2:00– Memorial Service, Taps, firing squad detail, short oration, wreath laid, bell ceremony, rifle salute, taps. Organized by Marine Corps League.

VFW Post 10272

8:00 – Jug Prairie Cemetery

8:15 – German Church Cemetery

8:45 – Graves Cemetery

9:00 – Rutland Cemetery

9:30 – Storytown Cemetery

10:00 – War Memorial @ Oregon

10:30 – Prairie Mound & St. Mary’s Cemetery

10:45 – Dunn Cemetery

11:15 – Brooklyn Cemetery

12:45 – Fitchburg Wayside Memorial

VFW Post 7591, Madison

9:00 – Memorial Service @ Monona Dr. & Nichols Rd.

10:00– Monona Grove Memorial Parade, starts at Monona Grove High School

11:00 – Services @ Blooming Grove Cemetery

12:00 –Services @ Roselawn Memorial Cemetery

1:00 –Services @ Highland Memory Cemetery

2:00 –Services @ VFW, 301 Cottage Grove Rd. for members of post who passed away last year.

MAY 26 2008



AL Post 460, Belleville

10:00 – Services @ Belleville High School

AL Post 313, Black Earth

8:30 – Start @ John Bird's office to conduct services @ 4 rural cemeteries & Village of Black Earth Veterans Memorial Park

11:00– Annual meeting @ John Bird's office, a potluck luncheon to follow

AL Post 437, Mazomanie

10:00 –Memorial Services @ Elementary School
Gold Star Mother Service, followed by Memorial Services @ both cemeteries
Potluck dinner @ Community Building, public invited

AL Post 534, McFarland

6:00 – Flags are put up
8:00 – Flag Raising Ceremony @ 2 cemeteries
12:00 – Parade starts at Christ the King Church
1:30 – Memorial Services @ Post. Flag Retirement Service to follow.

VFW Post 328 & AL Post 59, Stoughton

10:00 – Parade followed by Memorial Services @ Mandt Park. Return to Post for social, public invited. If rain, program @11:00 at Mandt Park.

VFW Post 8216, Middleton

9:30 –St. Peters Cemetery, 7121 County K, Ashton

AL POST 245, Cross Plains & WI Vietnam Veterans

Services at six local cemeteries

10:30 – Parade

11:00– Memorial Service @Legion Park. Chicken BBQ following services at a nominal fee.

AL Post 279, Marshall

10:00 –Parade. Program will start on/about 10:30 at Marshall Elementary School.

Guest speaker: General Denson.

AL Post 360 & VFW Post 11244, Waunakee

10:30 –Parade from Old Village Hall parking lot. Following parade, Memorial Services at Village Park. Speakers and reading names of deceased veterans. Potluck to follow at the Legion building – bring dish to pass. Public invited. Hot dogs & soda provided.



Notch Babies

Born in 1917 - 1921

From the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

Notch babies is the term used to refer to retirees who were born from 1917 through 1921 and who may be receiving Social Security benefits lower than those with comparable earnings born from 1912 through 1916. The issue of notch babies periodically surfaces in the form of mailing campaigns soliciting donations to fix the alleged notch.

The controversy started in 1972 when Congress made an error when calculating the new cost-of-living adjustments. The error resulted in some beneficiaries receiving greater benefit levels than intended. In 1977, Congress corrected the mistake by creating a formula to gradually lower the unintentionally high benefits for people nearing retirement. However, because Congress did not want to lower benefits for people who had already retired, people born between 1912 and 1916 were overpaid.

The majority of older American advocacy organizations do not support the lobbying effort to introduce legislation to fix the alleged notch because it would threaten the solvency of the Social Security System and would simply create a new “notch” consisting of individuals born after 1921. There are some organizations, however, that are currently soliciting financial contributions from notch babies in order to support their lobbying efforts.

If you receive calls or mailings from organizations urging you to help the notch babies by sending donations, know that federal legislation has been proposed in the past to no result and that it is extremely unlikely that the legislation would ever pass. The creation of notch babies was not the result of beneficiaries being underpaid; rather it has to do with retirees born between 1912 and 1916 being overpaid. If you would like further information on the notch controversy, AARP has a good summary on its web site at http://www.aarp.org/money/social_security/a2003-03-26-ssnotch.html.

It's the “Veterans Memorial Coliseum” please

By Paul Washington Sr.

The Veterans Memorial Coliseum at the Alliant Energy Center complex is often misrepresented in the media as the “Coliseum.” The Dane County Veterans Service Commission is asking the news media and promoters to advertise



events by the correct name of the facility - Veterans Memorial Coliseum - out of respect for the Dane County veterans who served and died in the military.

It is the legitimate name of that building and should be correctly used in newspaper, radio and TV advertisements for events. If you hear or read the Veterans Memorial Coliseum misnamed in the media, please contact the source and advise them of the correct name.

Operation Freedom

By Christine Scoville, Assistant County Veterans Service Officer

Please join the Military Order of the Purple Heart – Chapter 96 and Milwaukee County in thanking our United States Armed Forces members and Veterans for a job well done. The festivities will be held on Sunday July 6 from 9 – 4 at the Milwaukee County Zoo located at 10001 West Bluemound Road in Milwaukee.

All armed forces, National Guard members and veterans in Wisconsin are invited to bring their immediate families to enjoy the day at the Milwaukee County Zoo at no cost. A picnic will be held at the south end of the parking lot under the tents. For more information or for directions and shuttle parking please call the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 96 at (414) 299-9052. Wristbands required for everyone for free entrance to zoo and festivities and are available through the Dane County Veterans Service Office with proof of service.

Wisconsin Airborne Museum Project

From 82nd Airborne Division Association Newsletter

The Badger State Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association, Inc. is attempting to gather authentic Airborne memorabilia to be used in display cases to be placed in Veterans' facilities and local museums throughout the State of Wisconsin. If you have any authentic Airborne memorabilia that you would be willing to share for our displays, we would greatly appreciate it. Your name will be placed with any donation on display and any memorabilia you donate will be returned to you at your request. Donations could include: patches, uniforms, pictures, medals, materials, equipment, etc.

The Badger State Chapter is a fraternal, social organization of Airborne Veterans that covers the entire State of Wisconsin. Any Veteran who was Airborne qualified (Paratrooper or Gliderman) is eligible to join regardless of your unit. The 82nd Airborne Association welcomes Paratroopers and Glider Riders who served in the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. (Sorry, no "Air Assault".)

If you would like more information on our Museum project to promote the Wisconsin Airborne Legacy or to find out about membership in our Badger State Chapter, please contact Tom Gaukel, 1721 Manassas Dr., Baraboo, WI 53913. Call: (608) 355-2382.

The Dane County Veteran is published by the Dane County Veterans Service Office
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison, WI 53713
(608) 266-4158
e-mail : vets@co.dane.wi.us
On the web: www.co.dane.wi.us/veterans

Michael R. Jackson, Service Officer
Chuck Goranson, Editor

Other contributors:
Eleanor Harris
Chris Scoville
Dan Connery
Shirley Shaw
Lori Redepenning
Paul Washington Jr.

Announcements and news contributions are welcome.

Earn more with the University of Wisconsin

From Raymond Perez, Governors's Agenda for Growth initiative

Wouldn't you like to add "University of Wisconsin" to your resume? A bachelor's degree can help you learn new job skills or use the ones you learned while serving your country. You can also explore a new career AND increase your earning potential. Did you know that, on average, college graduates earn \$19,098 a year more than high school graduates?

The University of Wisconsin- Extension/UW Colleges make it easier than ever for adults to start or complete a college degree. Visit the UW web site at <https://uwin.wisconsin.edu> for information on a variety of program offerings including traditional face-to-face, online, and other distance learning options-designed with your busy schedule and life in mind. Additional information available includes: adult student services, career planning, transfer credits, applying for admission, finding ways to pay for college, and more.

Not sure how to transition from the service to daily life? A quick way to get back into the swing of things is to finish your degree before heading back to work. Or, complete your degree at night or on line. It's completely up to you. Forms of assistance and benefit range from scholarships to the GI Bill. For information just for you, visit UW at: <https://uwin.wisconsin.edu/gettingstarted/militarybenefits.aspx> for details.

If you're not sure where to begin, our educational advisors can talk with you by email, phone or face-to-face about your options. UW is your University of Wisconsin Connection: making it easier than ever for you to start or complete your college degree.

For more information or help finding a degree program that's right for you:

1-866-505-UWIN (8946)
uwin@learn.uwsa.edu
<https://uwinwisconsin.edu>

Dane County Veterans Service Office
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison, WI 53713
(608) 266-4158

A veterans service office is near you

Main Office

1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Monday-Friday: 7:45 to 4:30.

The **Stoughton** Area Senior Center,
248 W. Main St.
Most Fridays, 8 until 4.

The **Sun Prairie** branch of the
Summit Credit Union,
1333 W. Main
Most first and third Tuesday
afternoons each month, 12 until 4.

Oregon Senior Center

219 Park Street
Most 2nd Fridays, 1 until 4

VA Hospital

Most 4th Mondays of each month,
9 until 3.

Black Earth 1116 Mills St.

Most fourth Tuesdays each month,
8 until noon

UW - Madison campus

Vets for Vets, 714 University Ave.
Most Thursdays, 9 until 3

Appointments recommended

266-4158