

## Post-9/11 GI Bill and Wisconsin GI Bill

Dan Connery, Assistant CVSO

Effective August 1, 2009, veterans who served at least 90 aggregate days of federal active duty after September 10, 2001, may be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33). The VA started accepting Post-9/11 GI Bill applications on May 1, 2009.

### Benefit highlights:

- \* Pays cost of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive in-state undergraduate tuition fee at a public institution of higher education (paid directly to school).
- \* Monthly housing allowance paid to veteran equal to basic allowance for housing payable to an E-5 with dependents. Based on zip code of your school.
- \* Book and supply stipend of up to \$1,000 per year.
- \* One-time payment of \$500 paid to certain individuals relocating from highly rural areas.

In most cases, to qualify for the maximum benefit, a veteran must have served at least 36 months of federal active duty after September 10, 2001. Service less than 36 months will result in a proration of benefits.

Veterans who qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill who are or will be attending Wisconsin Technical College system schools or University of Wisconsin system schools to receive a tuition and fee remission (waiver) under the Wisconsin GI Bill may be impacted by Governor Doyle's proposed state budget. Per the Higher Educational Aids Board section of this state budget proposal:

*The Governor recommends requiring veterans who are eligible for federal education benefits under both the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Montgomery GI Bill to access Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits before accessing*

*benefits under the Wisconsin GI Bill...holding harmless any veteran put at a financial disadvantage under the Post-9/11 GI Bill when compared to the Montgomery GI Bill.*

For further information about Governor Doyle's state budget proposal, please visit [www.wisgov.state.wi.us/budget.asp](http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/budget.asp).

For additional Post-9/11 GI Bill details, please visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or contact the Dane County Veterans Service Office at 608-266-4158. You may also want to frequent <http://gibill.wisconsin.edu> or [http://dva.state.wi.us/Ben\\_education.asp](http://dva.state.wi.us/Ben_education.asp) since these sites will post any changes to the Wisconsin GI Bill once they become official.



*County Veteran Service Office Association leaders present Governor Doyle with the Veterans Advocacy Award plaque at the Capitol. (l-r) Ken Brown, 1st vice president; Donna Chrzas, president; Governor Doyle; and John LiDonne, immediate past president of the Association.*

# Eagle Grant at Edgewood College

Tom Bartelt & Ed Taylor, Edgewood College

This message is to make you aware of a new educational benefit for veterans in partnership with the US Department of Veterans Affairs' Yellow Ribbon program. Beginning the fall, 2009 semester, veterans who qualify for the new Post 9/11 Chapter 33 federal education bill, the federal government will pay college tuition only up to the amount charged by the most expensive public university in the state. Tuition at private institutions such as Edgewood College is generally higher. The Eagle Grant will make up the difference and allow veterans to attend Edgewood College for no charge.

The Eagle Grant program was proposed by Dan Carey, Edgewood College President, who is a Vietnam veteran himself and is motivated to give today's veterans the same support he received after completing his service.

More information about the program can be found by contacting admissions at Edgewood College at (608) 664-2294 or by going to the following website:

<http://www.edgewood.edu/events/eagleGrant/default.aspx>

*Veteran advocates present former Representative Terry Musser with the CVSO Association Veterans Advocacy Award plaque at the capitol December, 2008. (l-r) John LiDonne, Ken Brown, Chris Jordan, Chuck Goranson, Terry Musser, Donna Chrzas, Kathy Gausmann, Michael Jackson, John Solis*



## “Need a Lift?” comes to the web

from Badger Legionnaire, December, 2008

“Need a Lift?” is a college financial aid handbook written by the American Legion to spare you frustration and save you time as you plan your “after-high-school” education.

While the focus of this book is to help children of deceased and disabled veterans in their pursuit of higher education, all students can benefit from the information offered. The American Legion wants to help all students go as far as they can.

This handbook is filled with scholarships, grants, fee waivers, student loans, and the organizations that offer them. Also included is information to help you select a school, apply for student financial aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), learn about loan forgiveness, understand tax credits, and much more!

To search and print entries found in “Need a Lift?” for free, go to [www.needalift.org](http://www.needalift.org)

“Need a Lift?” can also be purchased from Emblem Sales at 1-888-453-4466 or online at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org)

## Military Day at the Dane County Fair

by Susan Orth

The Dane County Fair is pleased to announce the inaugural Military Appreciation Day. The Fair will be held July 15-19 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. The special Military Appreciation Day is scheduled for Thursday, July 16.

Special program and activities will be held throughout the day. Our goal is to offer our military men and women, along with their families, the chance to experience the Fair, while honoring them

and their service. Complimentary admission will be given to anyone with a military ID and their family. We also want this to be a fun, educational opportunity for the general public to learn about the military and gain a greater understanding and appreciation for their work.

For more information about the Dane County Fair and Military Appreciation Day, please visit [www.danecountyfair.com](http://www.danecountyfair.com) or call 608-224-0500.

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## National Personnel Records Center requests

Submitted by Chris Scoville, Assistant CVSO

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) is working to make it easier for veterans and their next of kin with Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Next of kin are the un-remarried widow or widower, son or daughter, father or mother, brother or sister of the deceased veteran. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased military veterans can use a new online military personnel records system to request documents.

The new web based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's mailroom processing time. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. Veterans and their next of kin may access this application at: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov> Please note there is no "www" in this address.



# Memorial Day

## **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 National Cemetery. Conducted by The Sons of the Union Veterans & its Auxiliary.
- 8:50 – Service at Confederate Rest. Organized by the 61<sup>st</sup> Georgia Infantry.

## **State Capitol Building – State Street (Rain Location 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## **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 Grove High School.
- 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.

## **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 @ Luckenbooth Café & family style dinner.

## **AL Post 437, Mazomanie**

- 10:00 – Memorial Services @ Elementary School Gold Star Mother Service, followed by Memorial Services @ both cemeteries Potluck dinner @ Community Bldg. 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.





# The Rettenmund brothers

by Michael Jackson, Dane County Veterans Service Officer

## **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, WI

## **AL POST 245, Cross Plains & WI Vietnam Veterans**

6:00 a.m - Services at six local cemeteries

11:00– Parade

11:30 – Chicken BBQ at Cross Plains pool

11:30– Memorial Service @ Legion Park.

## **AL Post 279 - Marshall**

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

## **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 bldg. – bring dish to pass. Public invited. Hot dogs & soda provided.

Richard (Dicky) and Russell Rettenmund Jr. both served in Vietnam. The only sons of Russell Sr. and Ruth Rettenmund, Russell (Junior) landed with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (Big Red 1) in June of 1965 as a member of a Ranger unit. Dicky arrived in Vietnam in March of 1966 as a member of the Signal Corps with the second highest crypto clearance as he performed courier duties while in country. Their cousin, William (Bill) Rettenmend arrived in Vietnam February, 1966, as a member of the 162<sup>nd</sup> Assault Helicopter Company which flew support missions for the Big Red 1. The Huey combat assault helicopter on display at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum is an actual gunship from Bill's unit in Vietnam that performed combat assault missions in Vietnam.

Dicky and Junior were able to visit with each other in Saigon in May of 1966, and although Bill never saw his cousins face to face when in Vietnam, he speculates his unit probably flew sorties for Junior's unit but they never connected. However, he did repay a \$10.00 debt of Junior's to a soldier from Junior's unit. (Nothing like maintaining the family's honor.)

Dicky returned home in March of 1967 and Junior in June of 1966. According to Bill, Junior was the first "official" Wisconsin combat veteran to return home and was honored by the Governor at that time. Bill was separated from the Army in May of 1967.

The story takes a tragic turn as Dicky died in 1970 due to asphyxiation while in his car; his death was ruled accidental, and Junior was killed in an automobile accident in 1975.

A full-sized flag pole was purchased by the boys' parents in 1976 and was originally erected at American Legion Post 313 in Black Earth. Following the sale of Post 313's building, the flag pole was stored until re-dedication in front of John Bird's Black Earth office on Veterans Day, 2008. American Legion Post 313 conducts its meetings at John Bird's office. Many relatives and friends braved the cold, wet weather to attend the ceremony.

Honor the memory of those that served by participating in a Memorial Day ceremony this Memorial Day.

# VA hospital ID cards

From VA Health Care Fact Sheet dated March 2008

The VA provides Veterans Identification Cards (VIC) to individuals who are eligible for VA medical benefits and enrolled at VA medical center. VIC cards no longer displays social security numbers or dates of birth on the cards. VIC cards will only display the veteran's name, picture, and any applicable special eligibility indicators: *Service-Connected*, *Purple Heart*, and *Former POW*. VIC cards are not required by the VA in order to receive medical care as long as one is enrolled and receiving care through their VA medical facility; however, VIC cards are used for identification and check-in purposes for VA medical appointments. In addition, a veteran having a VIC card should simplify the process of receiving medical treatment at a VA medical facility that differs from his/her primary VA medical center.



All veterans receiving medical treatment at their local VA medical center are encouraged to contact the eligibility and admissions department to get their VIC card. For those possessing old and outdated VIC cards, new cards must be issued. Veterans with old cards (those displaying sensitive information) should bring the old card to their VA medical facility, so that a new card can be issued.

For additional questions, please call the Madison VA hospital's eligibility and admissions department at (608) 280-7038.

# Free access to Wisconsin state parks and trails

WDVA News Release

Beginning in October 2008, certain disabled veterans and former Prisoners of War (POWs) are eligible to receive waivers of vehicle admission and trail pass fees for admittance to state parks, according to the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Eligible veterans are:

1. Disabled veterans with a 70 %r greater permanent or temporary disability rating by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA).
2. Disabled veterans determined by the federal VA to be totally disabled due to Individual Unemployability (IU).
3. Veterans who are former Prisoners of War (POWs).

Veterans may apply for the fee waiver by downloading and completing a Disabled Veteran Free State Park/Forest/Trail Pass Application (found at [www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/parks/fees/waivers.html#veteran](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/parks/fees/waivers.html#veteran)) and taking it to a County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) to certify it. The application must be signed and stamped by a CVSO and mailed to address listed on the form.

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation will mail out an identification card for a veteran to present each time he or she visits a state park, forest, or recreation area, which will then issue the veteran a courtesy pass for the day. Veterans are required to carry their identification cards with them when using state trails that require a trail pass.



## Benefit golf outing

From [www.wheelchairgames.org](http://www.wheelchairgames.org)

A golf outing to benefit the 29<sup>th</sup> National Veterans Wheelchair Games will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2009, at the Rivermoor Golf Club, in Waterford, Wisconsin. Registration is limited to the first 144 paid golfers and can be made by sending an email to [kim.michalowski@va.gov](mailto:kim.michalowski@va.gov). Check or money order should be received within 10 business days to hold your spot.

Mail checks to:  
NWCWG Gold Outing Chairperson  
Kim Michalowski  
Milwaukee Pension Center  
5400 W. National Avenue  
Milwaukee WI 53214

For more information, call 414-902-5706  
Cost is \$90 per person.  
Registration is 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and start time is 1:00 p.m.  
Entry fee includes 2 meals: lunch and dinner.

## Your service office

The Veterans Service Office is accredited to represent claimants/applicants before the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs through:

- \* American Legion
- \* AMVETS
- \* Disabled American Veterans
- \* Military Order of the Purple Heart
- \* National Association of County Veterans Service Officers
- \* The Retired Enlisted Association
- \* Vietnam Veterans of America
- \* Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

The Veterans Service Office has memberships in the following organizations:

- \* National Association of County Veterans Service Officers
- \* County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin
- \* WI State Association of County Veterans Service Commissions
- \* Madison Veterans Council

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Announcements and news contributions are welcome.

**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**

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

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

### **UW-Madison**

Student Activities Center, 333 E. Campus Mall,  
Suite 3136 on most Thursdays from 8 until 4.

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

### **Oregon Senior Center**

219 Park Street  
Most 2nd Fridays each month, 1 until 4

### **VA Hospital**

Most 4th Mondays of each month - 8 until 4.

**Black Earth** 1116 Mills St.

Most fourth Tuesdays each month, 8 until noon

**Appointments recommended**  
**266-4158**