



Missouri Women Veterans News



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MEMORIAL DAY BLOOMFIELD STATE VETERANS CEMETERY



There are those who would argue with the origination of Memorial Day. The generally accepted belief is that Memorial Day has its roots in a tradition started by freed enslaved Africans to honor fallen Union soldiers who had given their life to attain the freedom of those enslaved. No matter the roots, the tradition of honoring our fallen heroes has become a time honored tradition with the observance held on the last day of May.

The Missouri State Veterans Cemetery at Bloomfield upholds this tradition by hosting a program at the cemetery on each Memorial Day at 1:00 PM. The program generally consists of posting of the colors, a benediction, performance of the National Anthem, pledge of allegiance, a POW/MIA table ceremony, and guest speakers from the local community. The program is concluded by a firing volley, the rendering of taps and retirement of the colors. A local high school band will usually perform a variety of military and patriotic music before and after the program. The program is supported by volunteers from the local veteran service organizations, the Boy Scouts, Missouri Department of Corrections, the Patriot Guard Riders and numerous individual volunteers.

Family members of those interred at the cemetery receive personal invitations to attend the program from the Bloomfield Assistance League of the Missouri Veterans Cemetery Inc. The general public and all local veteran service organizations are also invited to attend. The cemetery program is one of many held in the local area. The cemetery program is held after most of the programs in the local communities are finished which allows for community members to attend their community program and also attend the cemetery program. The program held at the cemetery usually has the largest attendance of any program held in the Southeast Missouri region with a crowd generally numbering over 500 personnel. We would be glad to see you at the program. Please contact your area State Veteran Cemetery for information on their Memorial Day Programs.

Editors Note: My fellow readers Ciao – which means Hello and Good-bye. As I am saying good-bye to you as a Veteran Service Officer and your State Women Coordinator, and I am saying Hello to you as the Women Veterans Program Manager for the VA Medical Center located in Columbia, MO. I have just recently been appointed to join the Team and so proudly do with honor. What an exciting chapter to continue to work with Women Veterans in the Health Program. I am taking the knowledge that I have gained through working with Veterans from Missouri Veterans Commission and the network of other organizations and partners to continue to serve Women Veterans. The Women Veteran Program Managers at the VAMCs were established to provide needs of Women Veterans with respect to health care, rehabilitation benefits, outreach, and other relevant programs administered by the Department of VA. I look forward to the wonderful opportunity to address the needs of our Women Veterans at the VA Medical Center.



Bloomfield: 573/568-3871
Higginsville: 660/584-5252
Jacksonville: 660/295-4237
Ft. Leonard Wood: 573/774-3496
Springfield: 417/823-3944



“Bravery is the capacity to perform properly even when scared half to death.” “General Arnold”



Women in Uniform PAST

Leona (Rippeto) McKinney



I was corresponding to a local boy that joined the Army when I was 20 years old. He was captured in Germany and was held a Prisoner of War. Throughout the 25 months of corresponding to him, I felt like I wanted to do more for the soldiers and for my country. I already had 2 Brothers in the Army serving during WWII. What can I do. I remember the famous "Uncle Sam" poster, they wanted me. My father had to sign for me to enlist, he didn't want to but he supported my decision. I worked in the Personal Statistics at the Pentagon. I will never forget my first day working at the Pentagon. There were 3 of us in the W.A.C. (Women's Army Corps) trying to find our office. We were having difficulty and finally decided to ask for directions. We found a room listed "Lost and Found". Well we were lost so we thought we would just ask. This was an office listed just for the lost personnel. Who would of thought. Every morning I filed the movement order of each of the Units and the strengths. I was corresponding to a friend that was serving in the war overseas. He would tell me he couldn't say where he was but I knew where he was. After the P.O.W.s were liberated and returned back home I married the P.O.W. that I wrote to. We have 3 children and 3 grandchildren.

Betty Crum



I was born in Hastings, Nebraska but I grew up in Vandalia, MO. I have 2 brothers (Billy and Richard Van Boening) and 1 sister whom is deceased (Eloise). My parents were farmers and enjoyed the farming life. I graduated from Van-Far High School in Vandalia, MO and attended Bible College at Lincoln University in Nebraska. I wanted to see more than Nebraska and Missouri. I wanted to "See the World", so I joined the Army in 1959. I was a Private First Class Clerk from 1959 – 1961. When I was discharged, I returned home and went to work in a Bowling Alley and a local Restaurant. In 1962 I got married to Bobby, who had two children from a previous marriage. Then in 1964 we were blessed with our own child, Barbara, and then our second child, Teresa, came along. We raised all four children in Mexico, MO. I have worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) for most of my life and worked for the Audrain Mexico Center in Mexico, MO for 18 years. I enjoy sewing, quilting, embroidering, gardening, ceramics and playing Bingo. I have resided at the MO Veterans Home located in Mexico, MO since 2003. I have been blessed with eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. I was a just a good ole country girl but always getting into trouble. My joining the Military helped my discipline, to keep me out of trouble. I will always remember my "Good Times" in the Army.

Penny Ross



I was born December 12th 1914 in Madison, WI. I went to the University of Wisconsin where I earned a Bachelor's degree in Business. I went on to the University of Missouri to earn my Master's in Education. During World War II, I wanted to help the war effort. Because I already had a pilot's license, I was asked to join Women Airforce Service Pilots– WASP. I did my part in the war within the United States, bringing planes from factories to bases, flying experimental aircraft, and towing targets for the gunnery school. In 1944 the WASPs were last stationed in San Bernadito, CA where they were disbanded. I had a friend in the area so I decided to stay in California. I met my future husband Vernon in Pasedena. After getting to know each other, Vernon had to go to his home state of Missouri to help his parents. When he left, I decided to do the same and went to back to family in Wisconsin. After a year, Vernon and I finally met up again, and got married in Missouri. Verne and I started a family and I started my teaching career. I taught secondary school for thirty years in Harrisburg, Glasgow, and Moberly, going over the subjects of business, math, and some French. In July 2009, I was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, an award that is decades overdue for the women involved in WASP.

Veronica "Ronnie" Sommers



Serving in the Military is a family dedication. I had cousins there were already serving in the Navy, I then had a desire to join the Military; I decided it was my time. In 1944 I took the step (plunge) and joined the Navy. I did my initial training at Naval Training Station at Still Water, Oklahoma. I was first stationed in Washington D.C. with a group that tested the radar. We were in charge of the paperwork for the testing. We worked hard on improvements for the radar. I obtained the rank as a Yeoman 1C. After my active duty tour I decided to stay in the Navy Reserves. I am so glad I did, because it was in the Navy Reserves that I meet my husband, Chet. We married in 1962 and we both remained in the Navy Reserves and retired together after 20 years. One of my most memorable experiences is the time I got to fly with my husband in the Navy on a P2Y aircraft. Talk about a marriage taking you to such heights in the sky. I really handled the excitement well and would love to go again with my husband. I now reside at the Missouri State Veterans Home in Mexico and my husband comes to visit me all the time. I have always been remembered by people as Ronnie with Prayers. Serving in the Navy to serve our County was a experience and I am blessed that it was the Navy that brought me and my wonderful husband together.





Ask Cindy



Q. I am a recently discharge Veteran of which I served a tour in Iraq in 2010. It has been less than a year since my discharge and I am still having issues of adjusting from the Military life to civilian. Even my relationship with my spouse and children are being affected. Is there any help for me and my family for counseling or resources that can help?

A. First, let me say – Thank you for your Service to our Country. It is a difficult transition from being a Soldier to being a Civilian. First I would recommend for you to enroll into the VA Medical Center in your area to asses any medical or mental needs that you may have. The form needing is a 10- 10EZ or visit your local Veteran Service Officer for the form. Another great resource that will be able to help you and your family is the Vet Center. The Vet Center's mission is to provide combat Veterans with a wide range of counseling, outreach, and referral services designed to help make their post-service readjustment go as smooth as possible. The Vet Center's is also available to family members of a qualified Veteran. To qualify for Vet Center Services, you or a family member must have served in a combat zone or have received the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Currently in Missouri we have 5 Vet Centers available: Columbia, Kansas City, Springfield, and 2 in St. Louis. To learn more about the Vet Centers call (800) 905-4675 or visit www.vetcenter.va.gov/

Q. I am a disabled Veteran that my spouse has to take care of on a daily basis. I am able to stay at home with help but sometimes I think my spouse gets overwhelmed with my care. Is there any resources for us to turn to?

A. Caregivers are loved ones, family and friends, who are essential to the healing of sick and injured Veterans, providing critical attentiveness in the home to complement the life saving work of the medical points of care in VA's hospital system. Their sacrifice is enormous, every day, year after year, for Veterans, who safeguarded this Nation. Caregivers are our indispensable partners in Veteran's healthcare, and they deserve our support. The Department of Veterans' Affairs is pleased to announce the launch of a toll-free National Caregiver Support Line **1-855-260-3274**. Licensed clinical social workers will be available to answer your questions, listen to your concerns and directly link you to the Caregiver Support Coordinator at your local VA Medical Center. Each VA Medical Center has a Caregiver Support Coordinator who can locate assistance tailored to your unique situation. Also visit website is www.caregiver.va.gov

Did You Know?

Ö Presidential Memorial Certificate – is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current President, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased Veterans. To request a Presidential Memorial Certificate: Complete the VA form: VA 40-0247 and fax your request and all supporting documents (copy of discharge and death certificate to (800) 455-7143 or mail your request and all supporting documents to: Presidential Memorial Certificates (41A1C) Department of Veterans Affairs 5109 Russell Road Quantico, VA 22134-3903. For further question about certificate you may call (202) 565-4964 or email at PMC@va.gov

Ö VA Work Study - If you're a full-time or 3/4-time student in a college degree program, or a vocational or professional program, you can "earn while you learn" with a VA work-study allowance. The VA work-study allowance is available to persons training under the following programs: Post-9/11 GI Bill—(38 U.S.C. Chapter 33), Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty (38 U.S.C. Chapter 30), REAP Participants, Montgomery GI Bill—Selected Reserve (10 U.S.C. Chapter 1606), Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 32), Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 35), Eligible dependents under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 35 may use work study only while training in a State, National Call to Service Participants, Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program —(38 U.S.C. Chapter 31). You'll earn an hourly wage equal to the Federal minimum wage or your State minimum wage, whichever is greater. For more information: **1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)**

Ö State Contract and Business Preference for Service Connected Disabled Veterans – in bidding for job or services with the State of Missouri, preference will be given to disabled Veteran businesses doing business as Missouri firms, corporations, or individual, or which maintain Missouri offices or places of business, when the quality of performance promised is equal or better and the price quoted is the same or less. To learn more visit: Division of Purchasing & Materials Mgmt. phone: 573-751-2387 or visit <http://oa.mo.gov/purch>

Ö Unclaimed VA life Insurance policy – there is approximately \$33 million in unclaimed payments that represents death awards, dividend checks and premium refunds that once were mailed to policyholders. The payments were returned to VA by the Post Office because of incorrect address information. It is easy to check if you might be eligible for these unclaimed funds. Gather the Veteran's name, date of birth, date of death (if applicable), and if possible, the insurance policy number, and enter information online at <https://insurance.va.gov/liability/ufsearch.htm>. You can also call (800) 669-8477



Upcoming Events

April 21, 2011 Mini Job Fair (ACAP) - Ft. Leonard Wood

The Fort Leonard Wood (FLW) Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), in partnership with Army Community Services (ACS), invite you to participate in the ACAP & ACS Semi-Annual Job Fair, from 12:00 to 3:30 pm at the FLW 35th Engineer National Guard Armory., Intersection of Iowa and Alabama, Bldg 986. Fort Leonard Wood is the home of the Military Police, Engineers, and Chemical Specialists for the Army, so Soldiers from these professional specialties will attend, in addition to all the other DoD military branches, DoD civilians, retirees, and all of their Spouses. This event is free for employers and is open to the public and local communities.

May 20th - 21st, 2011 Armed Forces Day Celebration

Branson, MO (417) 337-8387 or www.bransonveterans.com

June 3 – Jun 5, 2011 DAV State Convention

Capitol Plaza Hotel , Jefferson City MO (573) 636-6515 or www.dav.org

Jun 9 – Jun 12 State Department of Veterans Of Foreign Wars State Convention

Holiday Inn Executive Center, Columbia, MO (573) 636-8761 or www.vfw.org

Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF) Grant Assists Missouri Veteran in Need

During this Economic time of Recession many Veterans have lost jobs. Although the transitioning back into the workforce can be timely and stressful, it can also have a rippling effect on financial resources. A brave and determined Women Veteran sought job placement assistance from a Veteran representative at the Missouri Career Center, who contacted the local Veteran Service Officer, who then contacted the State Women Veteran Coordinator, who also contacted the MVC Ombudsman. She endured many struggles trying to provide for her young children with no income, especially during the Holiday season. The Veteran Service Officer enrolled the Veteran into the VA Health Care Program and also filed for Service Connected Disabilities. The Coordinator facilitated the grant request with DVNF after learning of her situation. DVNF was able to provide this Veteran with a grant to allow her to pay her overdue rent to stop her eviction. The Veteran secured a job in a career field that was of interest to her and has a continued education and advancement plan with the Company. Thanks to our partners and loyal supporters, this mother was able to keep from being homeless with children, gain employment, and apply for her VA Benefits. She is on the right track with the help of all and the DVNF's grant.

The world's last surviving female Veteran of World War I has celebrated her 110th birthday

Not only is Florence Green, from Norfolk, the only female Veteran left who served in the 1914-18 conflict, she is one of only two WWI Veterans left across the world, and the only one of those living in England, The Independent reports. In 1918, 17-year-old Florence signed up for the newly founded Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF). The WRAF's original mission was to provide female mechanics, and allow men to fight in the war, but with a massive enrollment, many women ended up in other volunteer positions. She never saw the front line and instead worked as a waitress at an air force base in Marham, Norfolk. However, her WRAF service qualifies her for veteran status and she is one of two surviving Britons from the conflict. The other, Royal Navy veteran Claude Stanley Choules, who turns 110 in March, lives in Australia. The last surviving US World War I Veteran, Frank Buckles, passed away Feb. 27, 2011. Florence has outlived her husband by 41 years and lives with her 89-year-old daughter, one of her three children. When asked what it felt like to turn 110, she said, "It's not much different to being 109."



VSO Success Story: A Knock at the Door

As a Veteran Service Officer, we see traffic of Veterans and Families on a daily basis through our office. On one occasion, before I was to close for the evening I hear a knock at the door. It was an 88 year old (young) Women Veteran. The Veteran had questions concerning her billing from the VA Medical Center. We discussed about the bill and for further clarification we contacted the Billing department with the VA Medical Center. As in the passing time for the answer I asked the famous question "When did you serve?" She served during WWII in the Navy. We discussed about all the VA Benefits and we discussed about her income. The only income she had was a limited Social Security. We applied for the Non-Service Connected pension for her and she was granted. Based on her predicated medical expenses the Veterans Affairs Pension Management Center was able to grant her over \$340 a month to help with her income and medical expenses. Since she is receiving the Non-service connected pension she is also eligible for travel pay and adjustment to her co-pays through the VA medical center. My point is this; keep on knocking or asking about your VA Benefits and periodically check in with a Veteran Service Officer. Sometimes it is the little things in life that can add up that can help.

Submitted by Cindy Stivers, VSO

Editor's Note: Non- Service connected pension is for Honorable War time Veterans, it can vary from Veteran to Veteran on amount received. There is an income, net worth and medical expense assessment. There is also a similar program for Surviving Spouses "Death Pension." See your Local Veteran Service Officer for more details.

All-American Baseball League



The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL) began when the major leagues were in danger of collapsing as the men went off to fight World War II. With America's entry into World War II, several major league baseball executives started a new professional league with women players in order to maintain baseball in the public eye while the majority of able men were away. Chewing gum mogul Philip K. Wrigley initiated the creation of the league to maintain attendance at the ball parks. The Ladies professional league lasted 11 years, folding when the men returned home from war. Initial tryouts were held at Wrigley Field in Chicago. The league started out with four teams, one each from Kenosha, Wis., Racine Wis., Rockford, Ill, and South Bend, IN. By 1948 there were 10 teams. I am pleased to say I have a Rockford Peach living in my home town – Macon, MO. Gloria McCloskey Rogers has the distinction of being a part of National baseball history and a member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame. In 1954, Rogers played for the Rockford Peaches of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League team. The same league featured in the 1992 film "A League of Their Own." For more information visit <http://www.aagpbl.org/>.

VICTORY SONG:

Batter up! Hear that call! The time has come for one and all to play ball.

We are the members of the All-American League. We come from cities near and We've got Canadians, Irishmen and Swedes, We're all for one, we're one for all. We're all Americans!!

Each girl stands, her head so proudly high, Her motto "Do or Die" She's not the one to use or need an alibi.

Our Chaperones are not too soft, They're not too tough, Our managers are on the ball. We've got a president who really knows his stuff, We're all for one, we're one for all, We're All-Americans!!



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mvc.dps.mo.gov

Please join our Registration of the Missouri Women Veterans to continue to receive this Free Newsletter and Women Veteran Sticker



State of Missouri Women Veterans

Name: _____

Name you served under (if different from above) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____

Email address: _____

Birth date: _____ / _____ / _____
Day Month Year

Place of Birth _____
City/State

Service (Circle one) USA USMC USN USAF USCG GUARD/RESERVE

Service dates: From _____ To _____
From _____ To _____

Receiving VA or Medical Benefits: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____ (i.e. pension, comp., medical, etc.)

Have received benefits in the past: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____

Would you like contact information and a schedule for a Veteran's Service Officer in your local area to explain your potential benefits? Yes _____ No _____

Do you wish to share this information with WIMSA (Women in Military Service for America Memorial) in Arlington VA? Yes _____ No _____

Would you like to be featured in the next Women Veterans Newsletter? Yes _____ No _____

To receive your free Woman Veteran State Sticker Return this to:

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