



Missouri Women Veterans Newsletter



Volume 2011, Issue 25

www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/service/women/

October - December 2011

A Message from the Women Veterans Coordinator



The last six months I have been very busy in my new position as the MO Women Veterans Coordinator. I have had the opportunity to travel around the state of Missouri working at various Women Veteran events and I was very busy planning the 5th Annual Women Veterans Conference. It has been a wonderful experience so far meeting so many of my fellow Women Veterans. I hope you are enjoying reading the articles as much as I have been putting them together. The next Newsletter will be out in January, so until then I wish you all Happy Holidays!

Proud to be a Woman Veteran

The 5th Annual Missouri Women Veterans Conference was held on Sept. 17th in Waynesville, MO. The conference was filled with excellent speakers regarding women Veterans issues to include health, counseling, VA benefits, Veterans nursing homes and cemeteries. The women Veterans also went on a guided tour through the Pulaski County Museum. We were honored to have Senator Dan Brown attend the conference and Mayor Hammock. He presented a proclamation stating that on Sept. 17, 2011 it was "Proud To Be A Woman Veteran Day" in Waynesville, MO.

The last speaker was active duty soldier SSG Sondra Ann Duplantis. She gave us a motivational speech entitled: There Are No Women in Combat. She proved this statement to be wrong during her presentation. Her MOS is an Engineer Equipment Mechanic and she has been assigned many times to a Combat Engineer Company. She had so much energy and enthusiasm in her message we were all sitting on the edge of our seats. She quotes "It makes me irritated because time and again this has happened throughout history and our stories need to be heard, the TRUTH needs to be told. We need to be given the same credit and validation our male counterparts have had since the beginning of this Country. To do any less would be like telling us to get back into the kitchen."

The conference ended with a group picture of the Veterans. I wanted to personally thank all of the women Veterans, special guests, speakers and vendors for making this a successful conference.

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Missouri Women Veteran of the Year

I am very excited to announce that the Missouri Veterans Commission will recognize a Missouri Woman Veteran, with an award, starting in 2012. This award will be given to a Woman Veteran who has compiled a record of exemplary service as a Military Service Member, Veteran and as a Citizen. The award will be presented at the next annual Women Veterans Conference. Nominations may be submitted by a nominee or the Veteran herself throughout the year. Nominations must be received one month prior to the annual conference. The date for the next year's conference will be announced in the spring of 2012. The registration form is attached to this newsletter and will be in the upcoming newsletters, or online at www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/women/womenvet-nomination.pdf. I know there are many Women Veterans in the State of Missouri that are very deserving of being recognized for this award. If you have any questions, you may contact me directly. Thank you and Good Luck!

Amy Bennett
Women Veterans Coordinator

The Invisible Veteran



The title refers to women who have served in the United States military for over 200 years (often disguised as men). Yet only after World War II were women recognized as Veterans, and therefore eligible for benefits. In August 2011, The American Legion magazine printed an article asking “How high of a priority is women’s health on VA’s list?” This article states women Veterans are the fastest growing segment of the Veteran population. This article concludes that from Military Sexual Trauma (MST) to Post Traumatic Stress disorder (PTSD) the VA implemented a national training program to expand the therapy’s availability. This would lead us to believe women’s health is indeed a high priority. VA estimates that by the year 2020 women will make up 10 % of the Veteran population.

Women Veterans are entitled to the same VA benefits as the male Veterans. Comprehensive health services are available to women Veterans including primary care, specialty care, mental health care, and reproductive health care services. VA provides management of acute and chronic illnesses, preventive care, contraceptive services, menopause management, and cancer screenings, including pap smear, mammograms, and gynecology.

With these facts and the growing number of women serving in the military there was a need to address women issues. The VA held a Summit in Washington, D.C. on July 15-17, 2011. This summit had nearly 700 participants that were made up of women Veterans, women Veterans advocates, active, Reserves, and National Guard women service members, representatives from Veterans service organizations and nonprofit agencies, as well as VA staff who care for women Veterans. The summit featured workshops on issues that affect women Veterans. The VA is looking at changing the benefits and services for women Veterans over the next several years and they would like to have your input as a woman Veteran. If you have a suggestion on how VA can better serve women Veterans, please e-mail 00W@va.gov



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www.facebook.com/#!/MissouriVeteransCommission

Parris Island Receives 1st Female General



(This image provided by the U.S. Marine Corps)

Parris Island is home to all females entering the Marines for basic training. I am proud to inform all of my fellow Women Veterans that Brig. Gen. Loretta Reynolds has been named the 1st female General at Parris Island. Brig. Gen. Reynolds is also known as the 1st female to ever hold a command position in a battle zone. She has served in the military for 25 years. Brig. Gen. Reynolds is only one of three Generals in the Marines and there is more than 200,000 Marines serving our country today. Approximately 12,300 of these Marines are females. Brig. Gen. Reynolds has set another exemplify standard on how far women have come in the military today. OOH RAH!



A Brief History of Veterans Day

Veterans Day, formerly known as **Armistice Day**, was originally set as a U.S. legal holiday to honor the end of World War I, which officially took place on Nov 11, 1918. In legislation that was passed in 1938, Nov 11 was “dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as ‘Armistice Day.’” As such, this new legal holiday honored World War I Veterans. In 1954, after having been through both World War II and the Korean War, the 83rd U.S. Congress—at the urging of the Veterans service organizations—amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word “Armistice” and inserting the word “Veterans.” With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, Nov. 11 became a day to honor American Veterans of all wars. In 1968, the Uniforms Holiday Bill ensured three-day weekends for federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holiday on its original date. The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on Oct. 25, 1971. Finally on Sep 20, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a law which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of Nov. 11, beginning in 1978. Since then, the Veterans Day holiday has been observed on Nov. 11.



Saluting our Women in Uniform

Virginia Scott



I joined the Army Nurse Corp in Feb. 1944 as an RN. I was part of a surgical team at a casualty hospital during WWII. One of my most memorable times in the Army was during the Battle of the Bulge when after a terrifying experience, I came across a familiar face. We were working and everything just came to a dead stop. After the Germans broke through American lines, I was trapped in a foxhole for three days. It was just me and a few soldiers. There was no food, no water and no way to get any supplies. I thought we were going to die. Then suddenly out of nowhere came the 101st to save the day. I marched right out into the daylight with a paratrooper and was so surprised when it was a member of my own church from Kansas City. I also had a brother who was a bomber pilot during WWII. I never saw him, but I had to jump on a transport flight one day and I saw his picture. I asked someone if they knew who that was and they said it was the Pilot, I remarked, "that's my brother". I was discharged as a Captain in Feb. 1946. I got married in 1947, had three children and stayed active with the VFW, American Legion and volunteering at local hospitals.



Rose Wuellner



I arrived at Lackland Air Force Base for basic training in May, 1951. My parents were farm laborers who emigrated from Mexico to Lingle, WY. After basic, I attended stenographer school in Stillwater, OK. That was followed by my assignment to Greenville Air Force Base in SC where I would work in Personnel. It is also the office where I would meet my future husband, Floyd. I entered the Air Force during a time of transitions. World War II was over, but Korea was heating up. The Air Force was becoming a separate branch from the Army, and Truman was trying to break down segregation. Being a Hispanic woman in the military, I didn't experience discrimination on the Air Force Base, but I did in other places. During my civil service career I became the Hispanic Employment Coordinator. After two years in the Air Force I left with skills, confidence, and a new life with my husband Floyd. I have spent years doing volunteer work for my community through Hispanic organizations, county programs for older residents, and the American Legion. I have been active in Post 404 for over 50 years.



Patty Schindler



I was sworn into the Marine Corps in September 1952. I traveled first by train to Savannah, GA and then by bus to Parris Island, SC for boot camp. After boot camp, I was assigned to Camp Lejuene, NC. I was on mess duty for about a week before a job as a mail clerk opened up, and I stayed in that job for about a year. Camp Lejuene led to a new direction in my life. It was there I met Joe, my husband-to-be and we were married on September 19, 1953. I left the service in November and Joe got out a few months later. We moved to his home city of St. Louis, MO. In St. Louis, I joined the Marine Reserves and stayed in that until I became pregnant. My favorite thing about being in the military was learning to know people from all over the country, just the camaraderie of the whole thing. I have attended many Marine conventions and I have been a member of the Women's Marine Association since its inception in 1960. I didn't leave the Marines behind when I left my Marine duties. I realize it's a lot tougher now than when I was in the Corps, but if I had advice for young women who are considering the military, it would be just follow your heart...go for it.



Justine McMullen



I entered the Air Force Jan. of 1987. During my 8 year enlistment I was stationed at 2 bases in California and 1 in Germany. I also did a 3 month deployment at Dhahran in Saudi Arabia. During that tour I experienced high heat and humidity along with gunshot holes in my dorm. My job was in Supply. Due to the time zone differences it made my job a challenge to order supplies that were needed for the base in a timely manner. Most of the supplies we received were ordered from the supply personnel that we replaced. On leave we were allowed to go off base. Females that were stationed at Dhahran were not allowed to leave the base without a male escort. We weren't required to wear clothing that the Saudi Arabian women wore but at some of the other bases females were required to wear the Boshiya around their face. I enjoyed my time in the service and tried to reenlist after I got out, however, they weren't taking prior enlisted. My enlistment is something I will never forget and have been able to share with friends and family. I can't wait to have grandkids to share my "war stories."



MAIL CALL



Q. How do I get my disability compensation claim reevaluated?

A. You may request a reevaluation of your claim anytime that you believe your condition has changed or worsened. To do this contact your local Veteran Service Officer (VSO) <http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/service/serviceofficer/default.asp> and they will be able to assist you by submitting the appropriate paperwork to request an increase in your disability. If you were denied service connection based on lack of proof from an incident that occurred during service you should visit with your local VSO with new medical evidence that the VA has never seen. The VSO will submit a claim to reopen your case and see you through the process.

Q. How and where do I apply for home, business or car loans?

A. VA Home Loan Guaranty Program provides loan guaranties to Service members, Veterans, Reservists and unmarried surviving spouses for the purchases of homes, condos, and manufactured homes, and for refinancing loans. You must complete a VA Form 26-1880, "Request for a Certificate of Eligibility for VA Home Loan Benefits."

To apply the claimant should find a local lending agency that accepts VA loans. The lenders can also apply electronically for the Certificate of Eligibility which is a faster way of obtaining the certificate. The Center of Veterans Enterprise partners with the Dept. of Labor and the Small Business Administration to provide information, assistance and mentoring Veterans who would like to start their own business. See www.vetbiz.gov for additional information. The VA doesn't provide assistance for automobile purchases except for certain Veterans and Service members who need special adaptive equipment. To apply, contact a VA regional office (800) 827-1000 or a VA medical center.



If you move or change your email address, please let me know so I can continue to share the newsletter and other important updates with you.

Veterans Discounts



■ **Home Depot and Lowes both changed their policy a few months back.** They gave us a copy of their new one when it happened. **New policy is:** Those with Active, retired, National Guard, Reserve IDs can get a 10 percent off year round. Those with a VA Patient ID Card that says "Service Connected" can also get 10 percent off all year. All other honorably discharged Veterans get a discount four times a year on specific holidays. They just show their DD 214. (Don't know if that is just the five armed services or if they count the other two uniformed services or not.) AND several contractors were sending in their qualified Veteran employees to make purchases. They put a stop to that as well. If you have any questions please contact your local Home Depot or Lowes store, they will know the rules and regulations.

■ **Foot Locker** — Veterans, Service members (Active, Guard, and Reserve), and their immediate families with a Foot Locker Veterans Advantage Card receive a 20 percent discount every day of the year. That offer is good both on-line and at any store location, including Foot Locker, Lady Foot Locker, Kids Foot Locker, Footaction and Champs Sports —even on sale items.

■ Many restaurants offer free meals or discounts on Veterans Day. Check with your local media for times and locations.

Missouri Veterans Commission 3 Key Messages:

If you have ever served in the military have you:

Visited with a Veterans Service Officer?

Signed up for VA Health Care?

Joined a Veterans Service Organization?



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 28th-29th Regional Women's Veterans Conference, Macedonia Baptist Church, 1700 E. Linwood Blvd., Kansas City, MO Friday, 8am- 6pm., Saturday 8am-12pm. For more information please contact Carla Tillmon with the Women's Bureau at (816) 285-7234 or www.kcwomenveterans.wordpress.com.

October 29th Salute to Women Veterans Health Fair, Auditorium (2nd floor) Truman VA Hospital, 800 Hospital Dr., Columbia, MO 9am-2pm. For more information please contact Cindy Stivers, Women Program Manager at (816) 814-6457 or cynthia.stivers1@va.gov.

November 5th-11th Veterans Homecoming Week is being celebrated by The Branson Veterans Task Force and honoring Women Veterans. To register, please email Barb Riggle at sarge_585824@hotmail.com For more information visit <http://bransonveterans.com/>

11-11-11 Remembrance Day National Roll Call will be taking place at University of MO, Columbia College and State Fair Community College. The objective is to have a synchronized reading of all the names of the OEF/OIF casualties, observing a pause at 11:00 a.m. PST to observe a simultaneous "minute of silence".

Welcome our Newest Female Veteran's Service Officer

Lisa Helms our newest female Veteran Service Officer (VSO) served in the Army. She started with Missouri Veterans Commission on August 16, 2011. Lisa will be working in St. Francis, Madison and Washington Counties. She is a member of American Legion and enjoys working with her fellow Veterans.

Diamonds and Dogs can be a Girl's Best Friend



Military Dogs have an important role when they serve with our armed forces. These Military Dogs have been on many important missions such as they helped SEAL Team 6 when they captured Osama bin Laden. When the dogs reach a certain age it is time for them to retire. An organization has set up a program for families to adopt these dogs and give them the love they deserve in their final years. These dogs are heroes and are very loyal. If you are interested in adopting a Military Dog to give it a loving home, please visit their website at <http://www.militaryworkingdogadoptions.com/>

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LIBERTY
MARINE

MARINES HYMN
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PARRIS ISLAND
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SEMPER FI
SICK BAY
SQUARE AWAY
USMC



Missouri Women Veterans News is written and published by Missouri Veterans Commission Staff.
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mvc.dps.mo.gov





MISSOURI WOMEN VETERAN OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Personal information you provide may be used for secondary purposes [Privacy Law, s.15.04(1)(m)]

Missouri Veterans Commission will recognize a Missouri woman Veteran who has compiled a record of exemplary service as a military service member, a Veteran, and a citizen.

The award will be presented annually at the Women Veteran Conference beginning in 2012. Nominations may be submitted by a nominee or the Veteran herself, at any time throughout the year. They must be received by the month prior to the Women Veterans Conference.

Submit this signed nomination form to: Women Veteran Coordinator
Missouri Veterans Commission
525 Jules, Room 320
St. Joseph, MO 64501
(816) 387-2841
Amy.Bennett@mvc.dps.mo.gov

NOMINATOR'S NAME & ADDRESS: Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

VETERAN'S NAME & ADDRESS: Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Local Newspaper: _____

VETERAN'S INFORMATION: BRANCH(S) OF SERVICE (check all that apply): US Army US Marine Corps

US Navy US Air Force US Coast Guard US Merchant Marines US Army Air Corps

Other: _____

MILITARY SERVICE: From: _____ To: _____ Character of Discharge: _____

LIST ALL MILITARY AWARDS AND DECORATIONS (attach additional sheet if necessary):

LIST COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND OFFICE(S) HELD (attach additional sheet if necessary):

LIST VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS AND OFFICE(S) HELD (attach additional sheet if necessary):

PLEASE SPECIFY WHY THE NOMINEE SHOULD BE SELECTED AS THE MISSOURI WOMAN VETERAN OF THE YEAR. In the justification, please cite specific examples of accomplishments toward enhancement of female Veterans in the past 12 months. You may also include past accomplishments, for example: any awards, publications, association/committee participation, community service, or participation in campus/civic activities.

NOMINATOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____



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 _____

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