



Illinois Veteran News

An Update from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs ★ July 2016

★ From the Director



In July, we pulled the curtains back and invited the media in and around Quincy to see our new state of the art water treatment plant at our Veterans Home in Quincy. After nine long months, the construction on our permanent water treatment facility was completed and the facility began running full time. This would not have been possible without the an unparalleled interagency collaboration and cooperation. The water treatment plan adds additional disinfectant chemicals to the campus-wide water system to improve water quality.



Make plans now to attend Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair on August 14th! All Veterans and their families get in the fair for free that day! We will have activities all day. New this year will be a Kid's corner with a bouncy house and a JROTC drill competition. Of course, we will have lunch for all. Activities start at 10:00 am finishing up with our Veterans Parade through the State Fair at 4:00 pm. We hope to see you and your family.

We need your Nominations! We will be offering two awards, the Illinois Veterans' Patriotic Volunteer and Appreciation Award highlights and honors the work of an Illinois veteran whose contributions in service to the veteran community and their local communities are truly above and beyond. And The Illinois Veterans' Business Appreciation Award, which highlights and honors the work of any business or organization in Illinois that has significantly helped veterans, and whose contributions to those who have served our country are documented and deserve to be recognized.

Award recipients are those whose efforts add to the powerful narrative that veterans are dedicated, Life-long servants whose efforts benefit all of Illinois veteran communities.

Nomination Deadline – July 29, 2016

For more information and a nomination form go to <http://go.usa.gov/chEmV> The Veteran Volunteer of the Year will be announced on Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair, August 14, 2016.

Our mission at the IDVA is very simple. To serve those who have served. In doing so, we serve not only the men and women who have worn the uniform, but also their families. It is our privilege to be able to help our veterans receive the benefits they have earned through service to our nation. Our goal is to empower our veterans and their families to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

We know there are many veterans within our great state who do not require any assistance – but we still want to encourage you to "Stand Up and Be Counted!" by registering with your local VSO. In doing so, you're helping IDVA to do a better job of planning for services, seeking federal funding and understanding the needs of our veteran communities statewide. [Click here to register.](#)

We Thank you for your service and for your sacrifice and we at the IDVA look forward to offering our services to You.



We had two long time employees leave us last week. **Debbie Miller** transferred to the Treasurer's office as Director of Accounting. **Bruce Vaca** retired from the Quincy Veterans Home as the Administrator. Both will be greatly missed. And we wish both Debbie and Bruce the very best! Thank you for your dedication to serving our Illinois heroes!



New Employees

Carlos English is our new VSO in our Springfield office. Carlos was in the Air National Guard 183rd Fighter Wing Unit from 1998 to 2004. After leaving military he joined Springfield Police Department as a police officer and in 2008 began working for the State of Illinois. His wife, Amy, is with the Department of Children and Family Services. They have 3 children Sean 19 yrs old, Aizik (pronounced Isaac) 14yrs old and Mayci 5yrs old. He says, "My current hobbies other than going to all my children's sporting events are attending live MMA events."

Paul Tyson is the new VSO for Adams County-Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy. Paul is a veteran with the United States Air Force, serving from 1983 – 1997. Paul and his wife, Jeannie have 6 children. His hobbies include various sports, reading and poker.

Malon Norfleet is the new VSO for Kankakee County-Illinois Veterans Home Manteno. He currently serves in the Illinois Army National Guard and has for the past 18 years. He is a former Correctional Officer in Danville IL and a Lincoln's Challenge Team Leader. He graduated from the University of Illinois and is very proud of his beautiful 8 year old daughter, Marissa. "I'm a single dad, but I enjoy every moment watching my daughter grow up." He worked in Springfield six years ago out of Camp Lincoln for the Yellow Ribbon Program also. He enjoys motorcycle riding and playing basketball (and watching football) as hobbies. He feels truly blessed to have an opportunity to continue working with his current and future brothers and sisters-in-arms.

Employment Opportunities on our Website www.Illinois.gov/veterans

You can now see all of the Employment Opportunities for the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs on our website! Current listings will be available, along with the State of Illinois application form, frequently asked questions and more information about working with the State of Illinois. On our website, click on IDVA Opportunities.



Gwen Diehl served as Taylorville's Grand Marshall Fourth of July Parade

The City of Taylorville and AMVETS Post 29 sponsored their Fourth of July parade and named Gwen Diehl as their Grand Marshall. Gwen is our Veteran Homes Coordinator and a wonderful advocate for veterans. Ms. Diehl was honorably discharged in 1993 at Fort Bliss, Texas as a Sergeant First Class. In addition to the Bronze Star, her military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with three oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Service commendation Medal and Army Achievement medals. Congratulations Gwen!



Employee of the Quarter

Jim Muldoon, Social Service Program Planner 3 at our Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy was named Employee of the Quarter. Jim has been at the home working with the residents for many years. He is known for his quick dry sense of humor and has earned the respect of every resident and staff member at the home. Director Jeffries presented him with a certificate at the Home on July 14, 2016. Congratulations Jim!

Hundreds attend Manteno vets home ceremony

Hundreds of people attended the 50th Anniversary Vietnam Veteran Anniversary Commemoration at the Illinois Veterans home in Manteno on July 9th. Vietnam veterans remember that America didn't



always welcome soldiers home with open arms. Some were pricked and prodded. The rest were given little support as they tried to settle back into everyday life. Some veterans feel as if they never came home. The Illinois Veterans Home in Manteno hoped it changed those feelings on Saturday through a commemoration ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

"After all these years, this ceremony made up for everything we went through when we came back," said Ernie Shannon, who served in the Air Force during the Korean and Vietnam wars.

"You were often blamed for a war you didn't start when you should have been commended with valor," said Harry Sawyer, the assistant director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, in a speech. "From this day forth, we'll make sure that doesn't happen again," he added.



Director Jeffries presented Chester Boden, a resident of the Quincy Veteran Home his long overdue medals including a Prisoner of War Medal, a United Nations Service Medal and an Army Good Conduct Medal received during a small ceremony at the Illinois Veterans Home at Quincy on Thursday, July 14, 2016. Mr. Boden was a POW for seven months during the Korean War. Members of his family and residents and staff of the home were at the ceremony. Thank you Mr. Boden for your service!

★ Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair

Veterans Day at the Illinois State Fair is Sunday, August 14, 2016.

FREE admission for all Veterans and their families on this fun filled day! New this year – a Kid’s Corner including a bouncy house for the kids. And we will be having a JROTC drill competition. Bleachers will be set up so there will be seating to watch the competition. A free lunch for all veterans and their families courtesy of USAA.

We will be announcing the **ILLINOIS VETERANS’ PATRIOTIC VOLUNTEER AND APPRECIATION AWARD** and the **ILLINOIS VETERANS’ BUSINESS APPRECIATION AWARD**. Go to <http://go.usa.gov/chEmV> for nomination guidelines and a nomination form. Deadline to nominate is July 29, 2016.

It will be a great day to celebrate our veterans and their family members at the Fair!
Here is a breakdown of the day’s events:

- 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Memorial Service**
144TH Army Band - 5 Star Brass Quintet
Lincoln Stage
- 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. IDVA Benefits Expo**
The Shed
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon JROTC Exhibition Drill Team Competition**
Armed and Unarmed
On street between Lincoln Stage and The Shed
- 10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Kids Corner**
Bounce House, Crafts, Face Painting, Balloon Animals
Near the Lincoln Stage
- 12:00 Noon - 1:15 p.m. Official Program**
Keynote Speaker – Dr. Ann E. Rondeau
President College of DuPage, Vice Admiral (ret) United States Navy
144TH Army Band - 5 Star Brass Quintet
Lincoln Stage
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Lunch**
Served to Veterans and Families • Sponsored by USAA
The Shed
- 1:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Kids Corner**
Bounce House, Crafts, Face Painting, Balloon Animals
Near the Lincoln Stage
- 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. JROTC Exhibition Drill Team Competition**
Armed and Unarmed
On street between Lincoln Stage and The Shed
- 3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Musical Entertainment**
Cicero Sisters
Lincoln Stage
- 3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. JROTC Drill Competition Awards Ceremony**
Lincoln Stage
- 5:00 p.m. Veterans Day Parade**
Illinois & Grandstand Ave.

★ IDVA Calendar

- 8/05 Women and the Military Symposium**
Malcolm X College - Chicago, IL
- 8/08 NCSL Military and Veterans Affairs Task Force**
Chicago
- 8/13 Veteran Talk and Resource Fair** - Godfrey, IL

- 8/14 Veterans Day** - Illinois State Fair-Springfield, IL
- 8/18-8/20 LifeNav** - Chicago, IL
- 8/28 Veterans Day** - DuQuoin State Fair, DuQuoin, IL
- 9/25 Gold Star Mothers Luncheon** - Springfield, IL



An Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs program

**SERVING
★ THOSE WHO ★
SERVED**

SERVE ILLINOIS

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

CHICAGO CARES

IJP ILLINOIS JOINING FORCES

SVA

Campus Compact Illinois

Serving Those Who Served is a day of service created to thank service men and women, our veterans, and their families. On Friday, November 11th, 2016, people all over this great state of Illinois will spend the day engaged in volunteer service projects focused on benefiting our heroes!

You, your family, your friends, your church, civic club, scout troop – you name it! – could be a big help to a group of men and women who would never ask for help! Whether it's painting, landscaping, assisting with an event, writing thank you letters to the troops, or visiting our heroes in our Veterans' Homes – WE WANT YOUR HELP!

DISCLAIMER: Volunteering to be part of this statewide program may result in a smiling face, a warm heart, and intense sense of pride knowing that you Served Those Who Served our great nation!

*More details and opportunities to register your group and/or project will be coming in August 2016!

★ Did you know...



**YMCA
YOUTH SAFETY
& VIOLENCE
PREVENTION**

Healing is Prevention

Urban Warriors is a trauma-informed initiative linking at-risk youth with veterans. Many youth in high violence neighborhoods view themselves as soldiers, similar to a veteran, which creates a unique experience for both parties. The youth not only pick up on these similarities, research has reflected the striking parallels between experiences of child soldiers around the world and gang members in the United States. Through the work of the YMCA's Youth Safety Violence Prevention and

Urban Warriors initiative; collaborating to unearth common experiences, open dialogue, peace circle involvement, and encouragement to accomplish joint goals, forms a mentor-mentee relationship between youth and veterans. The bond of mentorship inspires not only youth to lead a better life but also leaves veterans feeling more enriched, blended into the community, and engenders a positive impact on their lives as well.

For more information contact:

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State of Illinois
Department of Veterans' Affairs



Illinois Department of
Veterans' Affairs