



Wisconsin Women Veterans News



Volume 2, Edition 1, Winter 2010-11

This newsletter is established in the hopes that we will be able to reach out to all our women veterans, active duty, Guard and Reserve members. We will be publishing the newsletter four times a year. If you have a story for the newsletter, please e-mail or mail it to Gundel Metz, SFC, USA (RET).



Contact Gundy at:
WomenVets@dva.state.wi.us

Or mail items to:
Women Veterans Coordinator
WDVA
P O Box 7843
Madison, WI 53707-7843

Check us out on FACEBOOK at
[Women Veterans of Wisconsin](http://www.facebook.com/WomenVeteransofWisconsin)



Kenneth B. Black
Secretary

Since the last newsletter, we have celebrated Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas and have started 2011.

I know many of you are eagerly awaiting an action plan from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) on how we intend to move forward to address the challenges facing our veterans' community.

WDVA's biennial budget request was recently accepted by the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs. The budget is a good beginning, but it doesn't get us all the way there. The time for action is drawing closer, and I want to share with you some of the key issues we are now laying the strategy and groundwork to address.

Re-envisioning how WDVA operates

Our strategic planning work will reshape the way WDVA serves veterans. We are finding efficiencies and cutting waste. We are focusing on customer service. We are creating programs and will propose budget amendments that take into account growing needs of veterans. The needs of our senior veterans are not decreasing. There are also challenges to address concerning newer veterans, including suicide, Traumatic Brain Injury, homelessness and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We will identify and request the necessary resources to get the job done right.

Wisconsin Veterans Homes

The Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) will release their full evaluation of the Veterans Homes. In the meantime, we are creating a plan to bring financial stability and stronger oversight to the homes. Recommendations from the LAB Report will be incorporated as they are released, and a detailed plan for the homes will be presented to the Board and State Legislature.

Veterans Trust Fund (VTF)

Finally, we must ensure the solvency of the VTF. For too long, veterans have taken a back seat as a funding priority. As the state has focused on other needs, our resources have dwindled. The VTF has been allowed to shrink to a point where we can no longer operate

(continued on Page 3)

Woman Veteran of the Year



Nominations for 2011 can be submitted anytime during the year.

We are seeking nominations for the 2011 Woman Veteran of the Year. If you wish to nominate someone, please go to www.WisVets.com/Forms#WDVAB0218, or contact our Women Veterans Coordinator and she will mail you a copy.

2010 Woman Veteran of the Year



Jessica Maple has served her country for 14 years in the Air Force and Air National Guard and still serves today. She has supported 3 major deployments and several military training and professional development events in recent years. She has served twice supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. She took time while deployed and volunteered at several base Fallen Warrior ceremonies. Involvement in the community and with veterans organizations is her real passion. She volunteers countless hours serving on several different committees involving local schools and athletic programs. She has been responsible for the recent creation of two separate

veterans parks in central Wisconsin, including one that memorializes a fellow soldier and friend, SSG Andrew Hitt. She is involved with the Veterans of Foreign Wars and is a fundraiser for the Goldstar Mothers Memorial. She has also been selected as the senior NCO of the Year for the Air National Guard. Her medals include: Meritorious Unit Award with 1 device, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Combat Readiness Medal, Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with 3 devices, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border and 3 devices, AF Longevity Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device, USAF NCO PME graduate ribbon with 1 device, AF Training Ribbon, and NATO medal.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE WOMEN VETERANS COORDINATORS (NASWVC) CONFERENCE

Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting the NASWVC conference from May 16-19, 2011 at the Concourse Hotel in Madison. Women Veterans Coordinators from throughout the country will be coming to Madison to attend this conference to learn about updates from the federal Veterans Affairs, Women in Military Service to America (WIMSA) and others. It is also a great time to network and find out what is going on with women veterans in other states. More information about the conference will be posted when it becomes available on the NASWVC web site: www.naswvc.com. If you are interested in attending the conference there is a fee. For those of you who live outside of Madison and if you don't stay at the Concourse, then the registration fee will be \$250. If you live in Madison or stay at the Concourse, then the registration fee will be \$150. Plus it is a good time to get together with women veterans.

Secretary's Column Continued

without a new influx of money. We have reached a crisis, and unfortunately, it coincides with the larger economic crisis facing our state and nation. Other state agencies are being told to make do with less. With the growing needs of our veteran's community, that is not an option for WDVA.

Today's veterans are not returning home to an economy that is kind to the American Dream. Instead, they face joblessness and home foreclosures. They're struggling with the same challenges as all Wisconsin residents, but often with added stressors like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, multiple deployments, or disabilities.

These are not easy times for America, or for Wisconsin. These are not easy times for our veterans.

- The suicide rate among returning veterans is shocking, and we may be seeing just the tip of the iceberg.
- The veterans' population is shifting demographically, and services and programs are struggling to keep up with changing needs.
- Homelessness among veterans continues to be a shameful reality, with growing unemployment a new factor.

We must provide a strong network to support service members as they reintegrate back into society and build successful, healthy, strong lives. They are our future leaders. We must continue to honor our seasoned veterans by staying true to the promises of care and support that have been made by the people of Wisconsin. Given the state's current fiscal climate, this will be a tough message to bring to the Capitol.

WDVA needs your help. We need to stand together and use the muscle of the entire veterans community. We are a strong and powerful constituency when we speak with one voice.

Mark your calendar: Our big day will be April 13, 2011 – the Salute to the Legislature. Make plans now to join us in Madison as we prepare to send a strong message to the folks at the Capitol. WDVA will be sharing more details about the rally and events over the coming months. I hope to see you there.

If we can show the Governor and Legislature that we mean business, our business will get done.

Center for Women Veterans, USDVA

Mission

In November 1994, Public Law 103-446 established the Center for Women to monitor and coordinate Veterans Affairs administration of health care and benefits services and programs for women veterans. The Center serves as an advocate for a cultural transformation (both within VA and in the general public) in recognizing the service and contributions of women veterans and women in the military, and in raising awareness of the responsibility to treat women veterans with dignity and respect. The director of the Center for Women Veterans acts as the primary advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on all matters related to policies, legislation, programs, issues, and initiatives affecting women veterans.

Leadership

Irene Trowell-Harris, RN, Ed.D.
Director, Center for Women Veterans

Betty Moseley Brown, Ed.D.
Associate Director, Center for Women Veterans

The next National Women Veterans Summit will be held Summer 2011 in Washington, DC. Please check the web site for more information as it becomes available.

www1.va.gov/womenvet/

Deadline for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Extended

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSLSP) has been extended to March 4, 2011, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program's guidelines.

The deadline extension is included in the continuing resolution signed by President Obama today, providing funding for federal government operations through March 4, 2011.

"There was a surge of applicants as we approached our earlier deadline, but there may still be more out there who have yet to apply," said Lernes Hebert, director, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management. "We are pleased that this extension was included in the continuing resolution which will give those remaining the opportunity to apply as we continue to work through the current applications."

The RSLSP was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss Authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service in order to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When RSLSP began on Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for this benefit. Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts over the past 14 months. Outreach efforts including direct mail, engaging military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets, will continue through March 4, 2011.

Scholarships Administered by the Women's Memorial Foundation

The Women's Memorial Foundation also administers two other scholarships, the Sarah Marjorie Kelley Scholarship and the LTC Margaret L. Ellerman, USA, Ret. Scholarship. Each no-less-than \$500 scholarship, is open to all military women and women veterans and is intended to provide financial assistance to women working to gain bachelor or master's degrees.

The Kelley scholarship is for those seeking degrees in technical disciplines like computer science, business, finance, etc. The scholarship is intended to provide financial assistance to women, particularly single parents, returning to school to pursue the education needed for better paying careers. The Ellerman scholarship is for women seeking college degrees in any field.

Scholarship applicants must; be enrolled at an accredited university or college, either full- or part-time, be seeking a bachelor's or master's degree, demonstrate financial need, possess a GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale, be a US citizen, be serving or have served in one of the five US military services, National Guard, Reserve or Merchant Marines, and be [registered with the Women's Memorial](#). While awards will be based on academic achievement, field of study, work experience, statements of objectives, recommendations, and financial need, consideration will be given to the "whole person" to include specific military contributions, sense of family commitment and community stewardship. Awards will be made without regard to race, creed, color or religion. Application materials, including application form, essays, transcripts and recommendations must be received by Dec. 30 for Spring term or June 15 for Fall term. Scholarship recipients will be notified by the Foundation.

To learn more about these scholarships or to obtain an application form, contact Brig Gen Vaught at 703-533-1155/800-222-2294 or by e-mail at president@womensmemorial.org; you can also download the [Scholarship Program Instructions](#) and application forms for the [Kellev](#) and [Ellerman](#) Scholarships.

Women Veterans Conference

We held our fourth Women Veterans Conference, October 22-24, 2010 at Ft. McCoy. Including presenters, we had 158 attend the conference. Copies of all pictures can be found at www.WisVets.com/Womenvets.

Conference IV – 22-24 October 2010

Our theme was: **WOMEN VETERANS – AFTER YEARS OF FITTING IN, IT'S TIME TO STAND OUT**

RECEPTION



CONFERENCE



COAST GUARD LEADS THE WAY

First woman to take helm of a U.S. military academy

The Coast Guard will have the first woman superintendent of a military service academy at the helm of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy when classes convene next summer. The Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Robert J. Papp, has selected Rear Admiral Sandra L. Stosz as the Coast Guard Director of Reserve and Leadership.

“Admiral Stosz has dedicated her career to developing professional Coast Guard men and women,” said U.S. Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Robert J. Papp. “We are also extremely proud to be the first service with a woman at the helm of our academy. The Coast Guard has always led by allowing men and women equal access to all career fields and assignments.”

In her current position, Stosz is responsible for policy affecting the recruitment and training of more than 8,000 Coast Guard reserve members. She has also commanded the Coast Guard’s only recruit training center in Cape May, N.J. She will be the first and only female commander to head any of the nation’s five military academies.

“I am humbled by the prospect of taking over such an important position in our service and honored to be following Admiral Burhoe,” said Stosz. “The school and officer corps have benefited in so many ways from Scott’s outstanding leadership and vision.”

Under the command of the current superintendent, Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, the school was ranked as a top college by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and was listed as the number one college in the northeast by U.S. News and World Report. The school had five Fulbright and three Truman scholars during his tenure. Burhoe also improved the school’s diversity record, doubling the percentage of minority admissions from 12 percent in 2008 to 24 percent in 2010.

"Admiral Stosz is an excellent choice to succeed me as superintendent," said Burhoe, "She has a distinguished record of service, and as a member of the board of trustees, understands the importance of continuing to move the Academy forward on its current track."

Burhoe is scheduled to retire July 1, 2011.

The Coast Guard Academy was established in 1876. The oldest service academy is West Point which was established in 1802.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For up-to-date WDVA Events information, please visit our website at www.WisVets.com/Events.

February 1, 2011

- WDVA: [Campus Veterans Benefits Open House](#) at UW-Stout in Menomonie from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

February 10-11, 2011

- Board of Veterans Affairs: [Board, Councils, and Committees to meet](#) in Madison

February 17, 2011

- WDVA: Secretary Ken Black holds [“Veterans Stand Together” Town Hall Meeting](#) for Marathon County in Wausau from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

February 18, 2011

- [Dryhootch: Comics for Courage](#) Laff-A-Thon Fundraiser at Hoepfner-Horn Brothers VFW Post 5716 in New Berlin from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

February 25, 2011

- WDVA Wisconsin Veterans Museum: [Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq](#)

March 4, 2011

- WDVA Wisconsin Veterans Museum: [What German-Americans Fought For in the Civil War: Insights From Their Letters](#)

March 18-20, 2011

- [WI VFW Women Veterans Program: Women Veterans Retreat](#) at the [Radisson Hotel and Conference Center](#) in Green Bay – [registration form](#)

March 23, 2011

- WDVA Wisconsin Veterans Museum: [What Caused the Civil War?](#)

April 6, 2011

- [Northern Highland Area Health Education Center: Project Hand-Over-Hand Workshop](#) for veterans' reintegration, in Rhinelander

April 9, 2011 [NATIONAL FORMER PRISONER OF WAR DAY](#)

April 9, 2011 SAVE THE DATE. Women Veterans Wellness Conference, 8:30-noon, Madison VA Hospital. Details forthcoming.

April 12, 2011

- WDVA Wisconsin Veterans Museum: [The Raising of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry](#)

April 13, 2011

- WDVA: Veterans Salute to the Legislature to be held in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Zeitlin Education Center in Madison at 10:30 a.m.

April 14-15, 2011

- Board of Veterans Affairs: [Board, Councils, and Committees to meet](#) in Madison

April 15, 2011

- WDVA Wisconsin Veterans Museum: [The Spur and the Sash](#)

April 20, 2011

- WDVA [WVH-King](#): Volunteer Recognition Banquet to be held at the Best Western Grand Seasons Hotel in Waupaca

May 15, 2011

- WDVA [WVH-King](#): Open House & Old Car 5, 2011

May 21, 2011 [ARMED FORCES DAY](#)

Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
30 W. Mifflin Street
P O Box 7843
Madison, WI 53707-7843

Standard Presort
U.S. Postage
PAID
Madison, WI
Permit No. 1369



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE WOMEN VETERANS COORDINATORS CONFERENCE

When – May 16 – 19, 2011

Where – Concourse Hotel, Madison, WI

Time – 8:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m. starting May 17, 2011

**Registration – 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. on Monday
7:00 – 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday**

President's Reception will be held Monday evening May 16, 2011 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

There will be a \$150-\$250 registration fee depending on whether you are staying at the Concourse or not.
More information will be posted when it becomes available at www.WisVets.com/WomenVets