



Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 10:00 am

Iowa Veterans Home, Whitehill Auditorium, 1301 Summit Street, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

Commission of Veteran Affairs members:

Present: Todd Jacobus, Elizabeth Ledvina, Darlene McMartin, Joella Perry, Scott Miller, Robert Suesakul, Becky Dirks Haugsted, George Mosby, Gregory Paulline, Reggie Richardson, Dennis Jones, Linda Jones

Absent: None

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs Staff Members present: Penny Cutler-Bermudez, Nathan Wilson, Kellie Meyer, Karl Lettow, Ben Dales, Kevin House, Gavin Sandvig, Melissa Miller, Mike Olson.

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE UNAPPROVED UNTIL ACCEPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____
Darlene McMartin, Chair, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

1. Call to Order: Chairperson McMartin called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.
2. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence
3. Roll call
4. Welcome and Introduction of Guests
5. Presentation of Volunteer Service Award by Ron Randazzo, on behalf of Senator Grassley, to Doris Lemker for over 40,000 hours of volunteer service to the Iowa Veterans Home.
6. Report from Stephanie Stock and Scott Gemmell for Tracie Pinkston (not in attendance).
 - a. VBA has processed more than 2 million claims nationwide in FY 24.
 - b. Over \$154 billion has been awarded nationwide in benefits to Veterans and survivors this fiscal year, with more than \$7.54 billion awarded in backdated benefits.
 - c. Working to reduce case backlog, down from 423,000 claims to under 238,000 claims between January and September.
 - d. Piloting an automated benefits delivery station. The ABD office is using technology to improve and expand access to benefits and service. They have created tools designed to automate time consuming manual tasks which enables claims processors to focus their time on more complex and analytical duties. This also provides an avenue to provide feedback to enable updates.
 - e. For Veterans in Iowa:
 - i. 2200 active pensions totaling more than \$2.1 million per month



- ii. Over 55,000 active compensation awards totaling more than 2.1 million per month
 - iii. 82% of Iowa awards are for male Veterans; 13% female Veterans and 5% unknown gender.
 - iv. 73% of these awards were processed by the DSM Regional Office
 - f. VR&E team currently serves over 1,000 Veterans, providing financial support for equipment, supplies and services to assist them in completing their individual rehabilitation plans.
 - g. Public Contact team currently has personnel assigned to The Des Moines Regional Office, Des Moines VAMC, Iowa City VAMC, Waterloo CBOC (3 days per week), South Side CBOC (every Tuesday) and the Cedar Rapids CBOC (monthly).
- 7. Report from Director Judith Johnson-Mekota of VA Iowa City Medical Clinic, Iowa City
 - a. Members from the VA Iowa City Medical Clinic, travelled to Washington, DC to talk about the challenges of the VA.
 - b. VA IC is the only VISN 23 that does not have a long term care facility.
 - c. VA IC is pursuing a community living center
 - d. Plans for building a Med/Psych unit to be completed by 2026
 - e. The Central Iowa VA and the CLC are both 5 star rated facilities
 - f. Decorah is building a stand alone CBOC. Plans for the ribbon cutting are February 2025
 - g. The VA Fisher House is still in the property acquisition stage
- 8. Report from Dan Kuester-VA Central Iowa on behalf of Lisa Curnes.
 - a. CLC and VA Medical Center in DSM are also 5 star rated facilities
 - b. Completed over 25,000 screenings in Central Iowa
 - i. Nationally VA has screened more than 5.8 million Veterans
 - c. Community Care billing has resumed. In July, the VA resumed billing first party copayments for non service connected care to Veterans who received care in the community. They have also resumed billing to third party payers for those Veterans who have billable health insurance and received care for non service connected care.
 - d. Marshalltown CBOC is now open. Ribbon cutting ceremony was conducted on August 28, 2024.
 - i. 12,000 square foot facility has dedicated spaces for services such as primary care, telehealth, physical therapy, optometry, cardiology, and audiology
 - e. Ames CBOC: lease and location are still in the works. Goal is to identify a space by the end of 2025.
 - f. Intensive Care renovation of the fifth floor of the main hospital is ongoing. Completion date is summer 2025. When complete, this space will consist of nine single patient rooms with a bathroom.



- e. The 2024 Veterans Stand Down provided 3000 meals over 3 days. There were 500 visits from Veterans and their dependents
- 11. Presentation from Harrison Swift, Home Base Iowa
 - a. Home Base Iowa is a State funded program whose mission is to make Iowa the state of choice for Veterans after serving. Heavy focus on employment.
 - i. Employment services include 5 career assistants (Camp Dodge, Burlington, Davenport, Sioux City and south side Des Moines) and they also provide services to spouses as well.
 - b. Recruitment: attend out of state career fairs to let people know about their services and State incentives
 - i. Military Homeownership Assistance Program
<https://www.iowafinance.com/homeownership/mortgage-programs/military-homeownership-assistance-program/>
 - 1. This program is for someone moving to the state to help with closing costs. Funds deplete quickly
 - c. Currently working on targeted social media campaigns
 - d. Access to educate Veterans on community incentives available to them such as the \$5000 home-buying grant as well as varying city/county incentive
 - e. Have served 203 Veterans in transition services
 - f. Veteran Population in Iowa- 158,976
 - i. Gulf War 2001- present: 33,446
 - ii. Gulf War 1990-2001:31,721
 - iii. Vietnam War: 59,425
 - iv. Korean War: 7,878
 - v. WWII: 1,377
- 12. Presentation from Carrie Moreno and Sara Glenn, Community Resource and Referral Center
 - a. VAs focus includes
 - i. Conducting coordinated outreach
 - ii. Connecting homeless and at risk Veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services and other support
 - b. Homeless Outreach
 - i. Provides case management services to homeless and coordinates care with the VA and community programs and services
 - c. Contract Emergency Residential Services
 - i. Short term transition housing in partnership with the Central Iowa Shelter and Services for those that have a plan, but need interim housing
 - d. Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services
 - e. Grants and Per Diem
 - i. Funds community agencies with VA oversight to provide transitional housing and case management services to homeless Veterans
 - f. HUD-VASH



- i. Joint effort between the HUD and VA to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness into permanent housing through Section 8 rental subsidy vouchers and VA case management.
 - g. Veterans Justice Programs
 - i. Outreach to jails and prisons to link justice involved Veterans to the appropriate treatment and services upon release
 - 1. Legal services may be provided include: housing, family law, income support, criminal defense in matters symptomatic to homelessness, upgraded characters of discharge, access to health care and employment law.
 - h. Staff Locations: Des Moines CRRC, Knoxville, Mason City
 - i. National Call Center for Homeless Veterans: 877-424-3838
- 13. Presentation by Iowa Secretary of State, Paul Pate and Jaime Rutan, Veterans for Voting Program
 - a. Veterans for Voting is a new initiative from Secretary of State, Paul Pate's office aimed at helping Veterans and service members vote in Iowa's elections.
 - b. You can get involved by:
 - i. Helping Veterans access information on how to register
 - ii. Share information on how to obtain an absentee ballot
 - iii. Drive Veterans to their polling locations on election day
 - iv. Direct them to the SOS website for questions about voting security, candidates, and election certification
 - v. Promote voting through your own channels
 - vi. Check in with members you have not seen in awhile to see if they plan to vote or require assistance
 - c. Voters may choose any person to assist them with casting their vote, with the exception of the individual's employer, employer's agent, or an agent/officer of their union.
 - d. Different assistance is available from the Precinct Officials
 - i. Voter Assist Terminal
 - ii. Curbside Voting
 - e. Sign up to <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=uADv5Q6ov0CPOBT-m8UN3ndaWmf3y2VOjiHYSFZhoMpUNUg0U1ILWEo0ODhOOVk3OFROU0xQUFIUVS4u>
 - f. Digital toolkits available including press release template, sample social media posts and captions, posters, sample emails and draft newsletter blurbs.
 - g. October 16th is the first day for voting
- 14. Operational update by Mike Olson, Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, Legislative Liaison



- a. October 8, public meeting to discuss the changes made to Iowa Administrative Code 801, Chapters 1 and 7
- b. Veterans Day on the Hill, usually January 22, no official date released for 2025 yet.
- c. If you have ideas to share, email them to Michael.Olson@ivh.state.ia.us
- d. Currently working on 2025 legislative agenda. IDVA to set up a public meeting with the legislative entities with the VSOs to talk 2025 initiatives.
 - i. Meeting will take place on November 6, 2024 via Google Teams Public Mtg to Discuss 2025 Legislative Priorities
Wednesday, November 6 · 10:00 – 11:50am
Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/udt-huyh-ija>
Or dial: (US) +1 732-630-8301 PIN: 520 970 008#

15. Discussion, review and vote on standard processing for License Plate Fund requests for Memorial Projects

- a. The standard process for approval of License Plate Funds as it pertains to Memorial Requests
 - i. 50% of the project funds must have been raised at the time of the request.
 - ii. Up to a maximum of 10% of the balance of the project may be provided.
 - iii. A time line to completion must be provided.
- b. All Projects are presented to the Commission at a quarterly Commission meeting are then reviewed by the Sub Committee with a recommendation that is presented to the Commission at the next Commission meeting.
- c. Motion to approve new License Plate Fund process by Elizabeth Ledvina, second by Becky Dirks Haugsted. All Commissioners in approval.
 - i. Voting on requests made at July 2024 ICVA for funds
 1. Baxter Veterans Memorial- UH-1D Iroquois Huey Project-committee to reach out for further information
 2. Vital Machine Purchase for IVH- IVH rescinded their request
 3. Salute to the Fallen-Vehicle Lighting
 - a. Denied at this time, can request if meets the new process constraints.

16. IDVA Update provided by Todd Jacobus, Director, IDVA

- a. 1. On Thursday, September 19, 2024, Larry Johnson, Director of the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals & Licensing, Steven Garrison, Division Administrator, and Hema Lindstrom, Compliance Officer, came to Marshalltown to present the 2024 Governor's Award for Quality Care in Health Care Facilities to the Iowa Veterans Home.



2. The Iowa Veterans Home was nominated for the 2024 Governor's Award for Quality Care in Health Care Facilities by four family members whose loved ones are residents here. The nomination followed an on-site visit by Hema Lindstrom and her team, where staff, residents, and family members had a chance to share their thoughts on our home. Here were some takeaways from those visits and conversations:

a. Residents appreciate having accessible health, wellness and professional services located on-campus. The facility also has a large, centrally located community room where social activities, family gatherings, and church services take place. The facility offers a variety of activities to residents, a few of which include: ceramics, rug-making, leatherworking, gardening, day trips, and choir. The Home has multiple leisure rooms with games and resident gyms. Also, Iowa Veterans Home residents make the fabric poppies that are distributed by the American Legion throughout the state on National Poppy Day, the Friday before Memorial Day.

b. The sister of one of our residents stated, "When talking with me, they really care about my brother and want to do what's best for him. I'm so grateful for the Iowa Veterans Home. When I visit IVH, the staff is very welcoming and assists with any questions or requests I have. Residents also appear to be in good spirits - a testament to how they're treated."

c. Another family described the facility as "amazing", and said that the IVH staff is "always ready to take care of (our family member's) needs and any concerns we might have. They listen!"

3. More than 100 IVH staff members, and many residents and families, attended the program in the Malloy LRC. It would have been awesome if each and every one of them could have been present to be part of this recognition. We are grateful for this team; their work results in such outstanding care for our residents.

4. The credentials of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs are directly reflected in the professional staff who work tirelessly as we support Iowa Veterans, their caregivers, and survivors. Examples of professionalism, dedication, enthusiasm, candor, and empathy abound throughout this organization, and are visible throughout the campus, hallways, and footprints in Marshalltown, Camp Dodge, and Van Meter. I will provide a summary of the 2024 State Fiscal Year report that we will submit to the Legislative Services Agency for the annual report:

5. Survey & Inspection Results. Our elected officials, and all of Iowans, need to know that there is no better long-term care facility in the State of Iowa than the Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown for those who meet the eligibility requirements. Since 2016, the Iowa Veterans Home has retained a 5-Star rating from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); this is the very best rating possible, and indicates that a nursing home has excellent staffing levels and quality of care. This rating is reinforced by the Iowa Veterans Home being recognized as a 2024 recipient of the Governor's Award for Quality Care. There are 403 long-term care facilities in Iowa and there are only two nursing homes recognized in 2024. The Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing surveyed the Iowa Veterans Home on September 20-22, 2023, and the results were: "no findings"; this is the very best rating possible. On April 29-May 2, 2024, the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing



again surveyed the Iowa Veterans Home, and for the sixth consecutive survey – dating back to 2021, the Iowa Veterans Home had a zero-deficiency survey.

6. Staff Recognition. We implemented an employee recognition program in order to feature staff members who set the standard on the Iowa Veterans Home Campus. The Champion and Poppy Award are presented monthly to staff members who showcase superior skills, demonstrate dedication to building staff morale, provide excellent customer service, and exude leadership among peers to support the mission of the Iowa Veterans Home. Our Recruiting & Retention team manage this program, which recognizes sustained superior performers in front of their teams and the residents they support, and the monthly award presentations highlight events for both residents and staff. I would also like to highlight our longevity award program – most notably, Rita Dostal, who was recognized this year with 55 years of State of Iowa service at the Iowa Veterans Home.

7. IVH Staff Heroism. Those credentials were best displayed on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 4:43 am, when the Iowa Veterans Home was impacted by a fire in the Dack Building 4th Floor, West Wing. Members of our Direct-Care team – Nicole Bailey and Nikole Kendall were among four staff members on the floor when smoke and flames presented from Room 426. These two staff members quickly entered the room – without hesitation – even though the doorway was blackened with smoke and flames engulfed a table next to the bed. Water from the suppression system was pouring out of the ceiling, and these two staff secured the resident's bed and pulled him out of the room within minutes. The resident, who is blind, shared with me 1 ½ hours later that he was scared to death and that he had never been so happy to hear Nicole Bailey's voice and forever grateful that they were able to get him out of there so fast.

8. Leadership Development. Following the life-saving focus of nursing staff during the pandemic, and the Summer of 2023 State of Iowa administered survey results, we implemented a leadership development program with "Leading Age" from September 2023 through June 2024, covering topics such as Employee Engagement, Negativity in the Workplace, Employee Accountability, Conflict Resolution, Hiring Smart, Service Excellence, Emotional and Rational Intelligence, Communication of Vision & Mission, Personal Effectiveness & Replenishment, Favoritism & Reward for Years of Service. We are using this program as a springboard into other training and development programs for our leadership team, which will improve employee retention and provide the very best in terms of service delivery for our customers.

9. Visitors. The Department hosted and communicated with National leaders visiting Iowa over the past year. On November 2, 2023 U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dennis McDonough visited the VA's Iowa City Health Care Facility to address challenges the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has in meeting needs of rural Veterans; both the Commandant and the Benefits Bureau Chief met with the Secretary in Iowa City and in Decorah. On November 17, 2023, Florida Governor Ron Desantis visited the Iowa Veterans Home, provided a presentation and answered questions during his Presidential campaign bid. On February 17, 2024, The American Legion National Commander In Chief, Daniel Seehafer of Wisconsin, visited the Iowa Veterans Home, participated in a meeting of Charles Horton Post 739, spoke with residents and toured the facility. On May 20, 2024, the American Legion National



President, Lisa Williamson of Alaska, met with our Legion members, made a presentation to all residents, and took a tour of the facility.

10. Volunteerism. The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs could hardly do what we do without the support of incredible Volunteers. We recognized more than three dozen volunteers on April 24, 2024 during a Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, which was catered by our Food Service Staff. We added two names to the Volunteer Hall of Fame: Doris Lemker, who has 40,172 volunteer hours at the Iowa Veterans Home; and, Deloris Clayton, who has 10,396 volunteer hours at the Iowa Veterans Home.

11. Donations. We are humbled and overwhelmed at the quantity of donations to the Department to support Iowa Veterans. We have received donations of \$1,000 or more from scores of individuals, organizations, businesses, and non-profits, including: Abate of Iowa, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Foundation, American Veterans (AMVETS), Sons of AMVETS, Car Clubs, Churches, Correctional Facilities, Daughters of the American Revolution, Disabled American Veterans, Iowa All-Service Academy, Iowa Elks, Iowa Moose Association, Lions Clubs, Not So Tiny House, Patriot Guard Riders, Radio Stations, United Auto Workers, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. The Department of Iowa Disabled American Veterans donated \$70,000 to purchase a replacement van to transport residents to appointments and events. There was a celebratory program to commemorate this donation on September 22, 2024 at the Iowa Veterans Home. The City of Marshalltown and the surrounding community ensures that no Veteran at the Iowa Veterans Home goes without a Christmas gift; the generosity of this Central Iowa community is astounding.

12. Significant Events. The Department was represented at a U.S. Navy christening ceremony for the 6th Block IV Virginia Class Submarine USS Iowa (SSN-797), in Groton, Connecticut on **June 18, 2023**. Captain Doug MacCrea, United States Navy Retired, has been the key leader for this project in Iowa; the commissioning ceremony is scheduled to take place in April 2025. The 13th Annual Iowa Military Survivor Muster, which is managed by the Iowa National Guard's Survivor Outreach Services team, took place on **August 18-20, 2023**. This event is funded annually through an award approved by the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs and funded through the Iowa Veterans Trust Fund. We had 105 entries in the Iowa State Fair Veterans Parade on Monday, **August 12, 2023**. The Iowa National Guard, Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, the Department, and key volunteers Dan Gannon and Harold Tackett did an extraordinary job organizing this program. 199 Commissioners of Veterans Affairs from throughout the State of Iowa attended the Department's annual Commissioner training program in Altoona on **October 9, 2023**; 152 County Veteran Service Officers attended the Department's annual certification training program on **October 10-12, 2023**. Major Sean Quinlan, United States Marine Corps Retired, was the Veterans Day keynote speaker at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery on Friday, **November 10, 2023**; Rick Fredericksen, Vietnam Veteran and retired Broadcaster, was the Veterans Day keynote speaker at the Iowa Veterans Home. We began the process of transitioning 30 of 60 independent living rooms in the Fox Building from domiciliary level of care to nursing level of care on **February 28, 2024**. 104 County Veteran Service Offices attended the Department's semi-annual certification



training in Johnston on **April 16-18, 2024**. Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day took place on **May 14, 2024**, and served as a commemoration event for the 40th Anniversary of the Iowa Vietnam Veteran Memorial at the State Capitol. Vietnam Veteran Dan Gannon emceed that event, Governor Reynolds provided remarks, and Keith Luchtel, a decorated Iowa Vietnam Combat Veteran, was the honored keynote speaker. The keynote Memorial Day keynote speaker at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery was Brigadier General Jodi Tymeson, Iowa Army National Guard Retired, who is a former Department Executive Director and Veterans Home Commandant. Colonel Brad Dostal, United States Army Retired, was the Memorial Day keynote speaker at the Iowa Veterans Home. Iowans commemorated the 80th anniversary of the D-Day invasion at Normandy, France, on **June 6, 2024**, remembering the service and sacrifice of America's Greatest Generation, and the memory of the 180 Iowans interred at the Normandy American Cemetery. Senator Joni Ernst presented military service and achievement medals to 29 residents of the Iowa Veterans Home on **June 14, 2024** during two ceremonies attended by more than 100 family members and IVH residents.

13. Iowa Veterans Trust Fund. Iowa Veterans extend appreciation to elected officials for establishing the Iowa Veterans Trust Fund more than 15 years ago. Since December 2007, an annual \$500,000 appropriation and interest from the principle of this fund has been available to provide services and support to our Veterans community. Veterans seek funding for vehicle repairs, emergency housing repairs, and dental work. During 2024, the Department disbursed more than \$775,000 to almost 250 applicants. County Veteran Service Offices work with Veterans to fill out trust fund applications, County Veteran Service Officers and Commissioners validate applications, the Department confirms and consolidates applications, and the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs meets monthly, or more often in emergency situations, to confirm that applications are in compliance with Iowa Code and approve applications. In addition, the Department disbursed \$193,600 to Veteran Service Organizations providing military funeral honors – fulfilling America's promise to our Veterans, their survivors, and loved ones.

14. Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs. The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs continues to serve as a vibrant, enthusiastic voice of Veteran Service Organizations to the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, and as a conduit of information from the Department to their respective service organizations. Elizabeth Ledvina, who has represented the American Legion on the Commission since 2015, served as the Chairperson from July 1, 2019-June 30, 2024. Darlene McMartin, who is the At-Large Commissioner, was elected to serve as Chairperson beginning on July 1, 2024. On May 3, 2024, Governor Reynolds signed House File 2306 during a public ceremony in her office – adding the Marine Corps League to the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs; First Sergeant Dennis Jones, United States Marine Corps Retired, will serve as the Marine Corps League's first Commissioner. Master Sergeant Becky Dirks Haugsted, Iowa National Guard Retired, represents the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW); Scott Miller, represents Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA); Lieutenant Colonel George Mosby represents the Iowa National Guard; Greg Paulline represents Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA); Joella Perry represents the Iowa Association of County Commissioners and Veteran Service Officers (IACCVSO); and, Robert Suesakul represents



Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH). Major General Gary Wattnem, U.S. Army Retired, completed his second 4-year appointment to the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs on April 30, 2024, where he represented the Reserve Organization of America; Gary was replaced by Colonel Reginald Richardson, U.S. Army Retired, who began his 4-year appointment on May 1, 2024. Mary Van Horn completed her second 4-year appointment to the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs on April 30, 2024, where she represented American Veterans (AMVETS); Mary was replaced by Linda Jones, who began her 4-year appointment on May 1, 2024. The Disabled American Veterans submitted two names for appointment consideration, and we look forward to soon having a Commissioner from DAV for the first time since 2019. As a member of the Commission I am aware of the great work that these volunteers do on a weekly basis to represent, advocate, support, and communicate. This commission of volunteers meets quarterly with the Veterans Community and stakeholders, meets monthly to review trust fund applications, and serves as the voice to me for the organizations they represent. Many thanks to all of these Commissioners, who are also Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, and thanks for your outstanding work to support Iowa Veterans.

15. IDVA is grateful for dedicated staff throughout the IDVA footprint – working hard to ensure quality care at the Iowa Veterans Home, quality education and training through our Benefits Bureau, quality services at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery, and quality facilities and customer service. This does not happen without leadership, and I would like to mention specifically the IDVA Division Administrators, including Penny Cutler-Bermudez, IVH Licensed Nursing Home Administrator; Dr. Joseph Hoagbin, IVH Medical Director; and Nathan Wilson, IDVA Operations Executive Administrator. Our Bureau Chiefs are an integral part of the IDVA leadership team, including Kim Bratland, Clinical Services Bureau; Sarah Bruner, Administrator of Nursing; Julie Carbajal, Finance Bureau; David Haines, Facilities Management Bureau; Andrea Maher, Quality & Compliance Bureau; Melissa Sienknecht, Food Services & Human Resources Bureaus; Gavin Sandvig, Benefits & Cemetery Bureau. Our front line licensed nursing staff are led by four outstanding Nursing Services Directors: Michelle “Chelle” Kelling (Malloy Building), Kella Minter (Dack Building), Kristy Kelley (Ulery Building), and Amanda Thill (Fox Building). We are also blessed with an outstanding IDVA Public Information Officer in Karl Lettow, and in October 2023 Mike Olson began duties as the Department Legislative Liaison. We have an outstanding team and will continue to work hard to provide the very best service and support to Iowa Veterans. It’s an honor to serve!

Events

September 27 11:00 am Memorial Service for Unclaimed Veterans Final Salute, West Des Moines Christian Church, West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

September 27 2:00 pm Unclaimed Veterans “Final Salute” Iowa Veterans Cemetery

September 30 10:00 am Iowa National Guard Command Sergeant Major Matt Strasser Visiting Iowa Veterans Home WITH 34th Army Band for Performance

October 1 7:30 am Marshall County Veterans Coffee & Camaraderie, VFW Post 839, 107 East Meadow Lane, Marshalltown, Iowa



- October 2** 10:00 am – Quarterly Meeting of Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, Iowa Veterans Home, Malloy Leisure Resource Center, Marshalltown
- October 9** 10:00 am Iowa Veterans Home Resident Council Meeting
- October 11** 2:00 pm Iowa Military Veterans Band Performing at Iowa Veterans Home
- October 13** 4:00 pm IDVA Social Event for County Commissioners at Iowa Gold Star Military Museum
- October 14** IDVA Training for County Commissioners of Veterans Affairs, Des Moines
- October 15-17** IDVA Training for County Veteran Service Officers, Altoona
- October 18** 3:00 pm IVH Resident Town Hall Meeting, Malloy LRC
- October 26** 5:00 pm Navy & Marine Corps 249th Birthday Ball at Gateway Hotel & Conf Center, Ames
- October 30** 11:00 am Halloween Monster Mash Themed Special Meal for Lunch in Atha
- October 31** 1:30 pm IVH Volunteer Advisory Committee Halloween Dance, Atha
- November 1** 10:00 am AMVETS Auxiliary National President Cindy Rice Visits Iowa Veterans Home
- November 5** 7:30 am Marshall County Veterans Coffee & Camaraderie, VFW Post 839, 107 East Meadow Lane, Marshalltown, Iowa
- November 8** 8:30 am Veterans Coffee & Camaraderie at Iowa Veterans Home, Dack LRC
- November 10** Marine Corps Birthday!
- November 11** 8:00 am Veterans Day Program at Iowa Veterans Cemetery (Keynote Speaker: Command Sergeant Major Rick Lamb, U.S. Army Retired)
- November 11** 10:30 am Veterans Day Program at Iowa Veterans Home (Keynote Speaker: Command Sergeant Major Steve Hyde, U.S. Army | Iowa Army National Guard Retired)
- November 11** 1:30 pm Dedication of Marshall County Veterans Memorial, Marshall County Court House (Southwest Corner), 1 E. Main St., Marshalltown, Iowa
- November 13** 10:00 am IVH Resident Council Meeting
- November 15** Time TBD Des Moines Area Community College Veterans Resource Fair at Ankeny Campus; IDVA engagement requested
- November 19** 10:00 am AMVETS Thanksgiving Lunch, AMVETS Post 2, 2818 5th Ave., Des Moines
- November 24** 12:00-6:00 pm AMVETS Thanksgiving Dinner
- December 3** 7:30 am Marshall County Veterans Coffee & Camaraderie, VFW Post 839, 107 East Meadow Lane, Marshalltown
- December 6** 9:30 am Staff Town Hall Meeting, Whitehill Auditorium
- December 6** 10:00 am Quarterly Meeting with VA Hospitals & County Association
- December 7** 1:00 pm Family Christmas Visit Day at IVH
- December 11** 10:00 am Resident Council Meeting
- December 14** 8:00 am Wreaths Across America Program at Iowa Veterans Cemetery, Van Meter
- December 14** 10:00 am Wreaths Across America Program at Iowa Veterans Home, Marshalltown



December 20 2:00 pm Resident Christmas Social, Atha Dining Room

December 22 5:00 pm All Academy Ball (Fundraiser for Iowa Veterans Home), Altoona
2025

January 8 10:00 am – Quarterly Meeting of Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, Iowa National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters, Johnston

January 22 8:30 am Veterans Day on the Hill at Iowa State Capitol

April 2 10:00 am Quarterly Meeting of Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, Iowa Veterans Home, Malloy Leisure Resource Center, Marshalltown

July 9 10:00 am Quarterly Meeting of Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, Iowa National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters, Johnston

October 1 10:00 am Quarterly Meeting of Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, Iowa Veterans Home, Malloy Leisure Resource Center, Marshalltown

17. Approval of Minutes from the ICVA quarterly meeting on July 10, 2024.
 - a. Motion to approve made by Dennis Jones, 2nd by George Mosby. Motion passed unanimously.
18. Approval of Minutes from the Trust Fund conference call on August 1, 2024.
 - a. Motion to approve made by Joella Perry. 2nd by Robert Suesakul. Motion passed unanimously.
19. Approval of Minutes from the Trust Fund conference call on September 1, 2024.
 - a. Motion to approve by Scott Miller, 2nd by Elizabeth Ledvina. Motion passed unanimously.
20. Old Business
 - a. Chairwoman McMartin attended Harrison Co Fair that celebrated woman veterans.
 - b. WASP Ride was a success
21. New Business
 - a. None
22. Public Comment:
 - a. Dan Gannon: In Memoriam program initiative assisted by the DAR. In search of 100 new members. This memorial would be for those that died during Vietnam era not combat related. All that is needed is a DD Form 214 and their death certificate.
 - b. Becky Dirks Haugsted: In reference to Todd Jacobus mentioning all of the donations that come in, it is noteworthy to mention a small thrift store called the “Not So Tiny House” in Hopkinton, Iowa (population less than 500). This is a great example of the outreach that Veterans have in our communities.
 - c. Karl Lettow, Public Information Officer for IDVA, commented that CVSO and State VSOs should have access to add their own activities to IDVA calendar.
23. Next ICVA meeting will be January 8, 2025 at 10:00 am at the Iowa National Guard, Joint Forces Headquarters, Enhanced Classroom. 6100 NW 78th Avenue, Johnston, Iowa.



Department of
Veterans Affairs

GOVERNOR, KIM REYNOLDS
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, ADAM GREGG

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND IOWA VETERANS HOME
TODD M. JACOBUS, COMMANDANT

24. Motion to adjourn made by Joella Perry, 2nd by George Mosby. Motion passed. 12:39 pm.