



The above mural honoring our Veterans through the era's is on display in our hallway and was created by local artist Galen McCarthy

VICTOR SIERRA OSCAR COMMO CHECK!

Vol 3 Number 5

"America's Veterans embody the ideals upon which America was founded."

May 2020

This publication is for Veterans, their families and their communities, compiled solely by the Jackson County Veteran Service Officer. The information provided herein is to keep you informed of upcoming events, newsworthy items and historical data of interest.

Proud member of



MN and National Associations of Veteran Service Officers



"In the aftermath, we are because they were." R.J. Heller,

OFFICE INFORMATION

The Jackson County Veterans Service Office is located at:

402 White St. (Door 6)
Jackson, MN 56143
507.847.4774

CVSO@co.jackson.mn.us

Monday 8am-4:30pm
Tuesday 8am-4:30pm
Wednesday 8am-Noon
Thursday 8am-Noon
Friday Closed

(Available for after hour & weekend appointments case-by-case)

First Monday monthly we are at the Lakefield library 1PM-3:30PM

Hours may be flexed without notice due to meetings and trainings. Please call for an appointment!

VET SERVICE OFFICE CONTINUES ALTERNATE Work LOCATION - A QUICK UPDATE - COVID-19!

The Jackson office will remain in operation but with the following nuances and restrictions. Regardless of the following instructions please call 9-1-1 if you have a dire emergency or if you are considering hurting yourself or others call the Crisis Hotline immediately at 1-800-273-8255

We will continue to service Veterans as we can however there will be no face-to-face meetings or interviews, contact may be made via:

i. Telephone

1. Calls to the office phone (507-847-4774) will be transferred to the CVSO as long as there is an operator able to do this
2. Direct line to off-site location is 507-933-4576
3. Calls may be made via cellular to 507-530-8378

ii. Email

1. Email contact is acceptable however we must maintain PII protocol to ensure sensitive information is not transmitted, email to CVSO@co.jackson.mn.us

iii. FAX

1. You can FAX to 507-847-2767

iv. Skype, FaceTime, ZOOM, etc.

1. These may be used for face-to-face interaction,

All home appointments are suspended



Transportation via the Veterans Van is at the discretion of this office and what the current protocols are at the destination. **FYI, Vet Van transportation may be suspended without notice.**

Until further notice CVSO will not be at the Lakefield Library as previously scheduled for first Monday's of each month

Please be patient as the time it takes to get information from other offices may be longer than normal due to emergency procedures and limitations that are being implemented to protect everyone's health during this emergency.

"Top 15 Things Money Can't Buy: Time. Happiness. Inner Peace. Integrity. Love. Character. Manners. Health. Respect. Morals. Trust. Patience. Class. Common sense. Dignity." — Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart*

Consider the quote above, these are all life attributes which are sometimes forgotten in times like this. The most important for us to remember, in my opinion, to weather this "Covid19 storm" are Love, Respect, Patience & Common Sense. Please work on these for your sake and that of others.

SPECIAL DAYS

May is: National Blood Pressure Month;
National Military Appreciation Month

- 1 – May Day and National Day of Prayer
- 1 – Loyalty Day - Reaffirm your loyalty to our USA!
- 3 – World Press Freedom Day
- 5 – National Teachers Day *(I hope this mean's the "Stay at home" teachers too! Huh, Mom & Dad?)*
- 6 – National Nurses Day
- 8 – Military Spouses Day
- 12 – International Nurses Day
- 12 – MOTHER'S DAY
- 13 – School Nurses Day & National Receptionist Day
- 18 – Armed Forces Day
- 19 – World Plant a Vegetable Garden Day
- 22 – National Wait Staff Day
- 23 – International Jazz Day
- 25 – MEMORIAL DAY
- 25 – National Missing Children's Day
- 28 – Amnesty International Day!



Special days in April for the military...

- Silver Star Service Banner Day – May 1
- VE (*WWII Victory in Europe*) Day – May 8
- Children of Fallen Patriots Day – May 13
- Armed Forces Day – May 18



Your Jackson County CVSO will be on the KKOJ Morning Show the 2nd

Tuesday of every month. Tune in but **don't tune out!** The show begins at 8:50AM. Question & answer, interesting information, VA Program updates fun facts, straight talk and announcements. This will be geared for all Veterans, their families and Veteran Organizations...



STAY TUNED - STAY INFORMED!



R.E.D. FRIDAY - WEAR RED EVERY FRIDAY TO REMEMBER ALL WHO ARE DEPLOYED!



Through the vehicle of radio, Thomas Lyons of the MN Military Radio Hour provides information pertinent to today! He has a guest most every week and discusses upcoming events important to you as the Veteran or military family. *The MN Military Radio Hour is on KKOJ radio at 3PM Sundays.*

FIRST MONDAY MONTHLY IN LAKEFIELD

Don't forget that the Jackson County Veteran Service Office is located at the Lakefield Library the first Monday of every month, 1-3:30PM. C'mon down and visit! **RECOMMEND THAT YOU CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT FIRST AT 507-847-4774 OR JUST WALK IN...**



WARNING!!!!!!



With all that's going on these days the scammers are out taking advantage of the confusion, the desire for help & information and the endearing trust we have for authority.

- If you do not know who is contacting you be sure to ask questions only they might know the answers for.
- Remember that the IRS or other government will never call or email you asking for personal information.
- If a call or email seems suspicious it usually is, contact law enforcement if you receive one.

It's a good idea to keep a pen and tablet near your phone just for this purpose so you can write any information down concerning the call and the caller. It's also a good practice anyway for convenience.

GRANTS AND FINANCES

Yes, there is help out there! We just have to know where to look, what to look for and figure how we qualify or what for. I will not go into the particulars of each grant because each person has their own unique issues.



All grants are governed by their own requirements and, obviously, the most prominent of those is "NEED". You must display a financial need when you apply and this includes income, among other things.

SSAP

This is a grant that the MDVA generally always has available, it is not a "special grant" per the current crisis we are facing at this time. This grant can be requested at any time but keep in mind that this is a "ONE-TIME" grant so consider it carefully. However, it may be revisited after a certain time period (*generally one year or more*).

This program also includes the annual grants for dental and eyeglasses so if there is a need be sure to call your CVSO.

SSAP can also include subsistence help but additional information is required for this.

Below is a snapshot of the process once the application leaves our office: This data as of 04May20 at 1:00pm and it changes frequently. (*Apps=Applications, this is a statewide estimate*)

- Apps Received: **4,124**
- Apps Validated: **3,264**
- Apps Approved: **396**
- Apps Denied: **60**
- Apps Pending More Information: **335**
- Estimated Processing Time: **52 business days**

SPECIAL NEEDS GRANT

Again, this is a once-in-a-lifetime grant you can receive for an emergent unplanned situation.

The cap amount for this is variable, determined by the need. You must be able to provide a narrative commensurate with the situation for justification to include supporting documentation and final estimated costs.

We all are well versed in “robbing Peter to pay Paul” and with that in mind these grants are not provided to the Veteran as a check or direct deposit they are disbursed directly to the vendor providing the services.

COVID19 DISASTER RELIEF GRANT

Disaster Relief assistance provides up to a \$1,000 reimbursement to Veterans and dependents that live in an area affected by a natural disaster, such as tornado and flooding, when declared a state of emergency by the Governor of Minnesota. Veterans and dependents must provide receipts verifying proof of the pre-approved expenditures listed per type of disaster.

Please contact your County Veterans Service Officer for more information or assistance in applying for Disaster Relief benefits. Find your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

The COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant is to mitigate the negative effects and economic impact COVID-19 has had on Veterans and their families by providing a one-time financial relief grant in the amount of \$1,000.

Applications for the COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant must demonstrate a financial loss on or after the date of the Governor's Emergency Executive Order, March 13, 2020. A closing date for the disaster relief grant has yet to be determined and will depend on the length of the peacetime emergency declared by the Governor of the State of Minnesota and the availability of funding.

Eligibility

To qualify for the COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant, applicants must be:

1. A Veteran as defined by MN Statute 197.447, or the surviving spouse (who has not remarried) of a deceased Veteran, (See page 9 of this newsletter for a complete printing) and
2. A Minnesota Resident, and
3. Have been negatively financial impacted by COVID-19.

* Note: Two Veterans married to each other are both authorized to apply for and receive the Disaster Relief Grant.

COVID19 Eligibility Criteria & Supporting Documents

For the purposes of this section, applicant means a Veteran, or surviving spouse. Eligible applicants must be

able to demonstrate a financial loss related to one of the situations listed below:

1. The applicant or their legal dependent have/had a confirmed case of COVID-19.
Requires:
 - o Test results showing a positive COVID-19 test or;
 - o A letter from a healthcare provider indicating a COVID-19 diagnosis.
2. A healthcare provider has determined that the applicant, or their spouse's, presence in the workplace would jeopardize their own health or the health of others because of likely exposure to COVID-19.
Requires:
 - o A letter from a medical professional instructing the applicant to quarantine
3. A healthcare provider has determined the applicant, or their spouse's, health was jeopardized because of a diagnosed underlying health condition(s) which would have put them at an increased risk if exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.
Requires:
 - o A letter from a healthcare provider stating or recommending that the individual self-quarantine or reduce exposure and
 - o Proof that they did not work for a specific period of time to actually reduce exposure.
4. An applicant is or was under legal isolation or legal quarantine (*Minn. Stat. 144.419*) related to a diagnosis of COVID-19 or they are/were caring for a dependent under legal isolation or legal quarantine (*this would be rare*).
5. The applicant, or their spouse's, employer directs them not to report to work for COVID-19-related reasons.
Requires:
 - o A letter or communication from your employer.
6. The applicant, or their spouse's, workplace is closed for COVID-19-related health and safety reasons and they are excused from work duties and cannot be reassigned.
Requires:
 - o A letter or communication from their employer that confirms their workplace is closed for COVID-19 related health and safety reasons and the applicant is excused from work duties or the applicant cannot be reassigned.
7. The applicant is financially impacted by a school or care provider closure due to COVID-19.
Requires:
 - o A letter or communication from your child's school or child care provider and
 - o A birth certificate if the child was born outside of Minnesota. Dependents born in Minnesota can be verified by

- Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs staff and
- o Supporting documentation showing a financial loss.

Demonstrating a Financial Loss

If the documentation submitted to support your eligibility criteria does not clearly demonstrate a financial loss you must submit additional documentation to clearly demonstrate it. For the purposes of this section financial loss means a reduction or severance of a household's earned or unearned income. Examples of supporting documentation may include but is not limited to:

1. A letter from an employer stating a reduction in hours, salary, being furloughed, or laid off.
2. Confirmation of receipt of Unemployment Insurance
3. History of pay stubs showing hours worked prior to 3/13/2020 through application date which demonstrate a reduction in hours.

Self-Employed or an Independent Contractor?

If you are self-employed or an independent contractor you must prove approval of or receipt of MN Unemployment Insurance in order to properly demonstrate a financial loss. You may contact **MN DEED** for this information. <https://mn.gov/deed/>. DEED may also have some additional or alternative grants available too.

You may also contact the SBDC (Small Business Development Center) and ask about the **Pandemic** Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program. Your nearest office is:

Southwest Minnesota State University
Small Business Development Center
Science and Technology Bldg 201
1501 State Street
Marshall, MN 56258
507-537-7386

sbdc@smsu.edu or www.SBDCAssistance.com

If you wish to stay updated as the SBDC has been working to provide guidance in navigating these times. Go online to <https://mn.gov/covid19/business-orgs/resources/small-business.jsp>

Are you A Farmer?

If you are a farmer call your local CVSO and ask for the link (www.flaginc.org/publication/farmers-guide-to-covid-19-relief-4-27-20-update/) or a copy of the "Farmers' Guide to COVID-19 Relief" - April 2020 - A Publication of Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc.

How to Apply

Call your local CVSO to ensure you are eligible for the grant. Once deemed eligible you can complete the **MDVA** form 1A and attach the required documentation.

Your CVSO will then submit it electronically. You may submit it yourself but it is recommended that your CVSO does this so there is a good "paper trail".

IMPORTANT REMINDER!
If you are self-employed, a business owner with employees or are a farmer, different rules and criteria applies. Contact your CVSO.

MACV EMERGENCY GRANTS

MACV (MN Assistance Council for Veterans) is still there for you if you are homeless, about to be homeless or have incurred a financial emergency due to an unexpected break-down.

There are other services that MACV offers to help you get back on or stay on track financially and legally. This a Minnesota program and you must reside in Minnesota to be qualified.

Generally your local CVSO will administrate the application with you but the final approval lies with MACV. Be prepared to demonstrate a need for the grant financially as well as a viable emergent situation. The need must be justified and well documented. For more information please go online to www.mac-v.org

WHILING AWAY YOUR DAYS AT HOME

CVSO Jeffrey L. Gay

The stay at home order, it is a necessary evil. If we want to mitigate the spread of this or any disease we may carry we must obey it. I understand it, I accept it but I also feel it's akin to being under house arrest.

The problem I have been experiencing is that "the warden" (my wife) is in close proximity and I end up in solitary confinement at the drop of a hat!



OK, it's not that bad, bless her soul, but as a guy we like to complain and sometimes **embellish** the facts. The real hard part is keeping busy. Sure, I have honey-do projects but I also have down time to watch TV, movies, play games, read, exercise, etc. However, these can become mundane and boring after a spell too.

Comfort food is always good. Brings you back to the days when you hadn't a care in the world. Food, though, may lead to a backlash effect, that may cause another project at home for you, dieting! It's an endless cycle! Remember, chocolate is calming... Isn't it?

I like to keep my mind busy and have been taking in **webinars** and **TEDx Talks**. There are many places to locate a webinar to help expand your knowledge and some are through your VA, www.YouTube.com, schools, etc. TED Talks are similar to a webinar and may be found on YouTube or by going to www.ted.com. By definition a TEDx talk is:



“a video created from a presentation at the main **TEDx** (Technology, Entertainment, Design) conference or one of its many satellite events around the world. TEDx talks are limited to a maximum length of 18 minutes but may be on any topic.”

To find a TEDx Talk subject that interests you go online and choose one “by the number”:



1. Tell us what interests and motivates you.
2. Watch your first recommendation and then let us know if you liked it or not.
3. Keep it going – your recommendations get better the more you watch.
4. Enjoy! You'll receive recommendations only when we have something great to show you.

Besides the content the best thing about a TEDx Talk is that each are no more than 18 minutes in length, not long enough for you to get bored or lose interest!

Another option is a **podcast**... This is much like TEDx but primarily audio only. There's a multitude of subjects you can choose from to include audio books. These may be downloaded to your computer, smart phone, iPod, etc.

IF YOU'RE NOT TECHNOLOGICALLY SAVVY

If you don't have a computer or the Internet there are still many ways to vary your routine, find pride in yourself and be productive while having fun. A couple that I'm doing, besides the TED Talks and Webinars, are gardening, wood craft (or wood *butchering*, it's all in the eye of the beholder), reading, exercise and, of course, the tried and true nap!

My wife and I have opposing views as to the value of a nap but as I tell her, I use the naps to expand the potential of my mind. I have come up with many interesting concepts based on “visions” (*dreams*) I have had napping. She's not buying it however!

After reading the book “Square Foot Gardening” by Mel Bartholomew decades ago I have finally put it into practice. These are very manageable and provide you the ability to increase your yields. Of course, me being me I used my “napping imagination” and ability to sculpt (*butcher*) wood to construct an above-ground standing garden of 4'x10'. I no longer have to bend my old knees and back to care for it.



It seems that another trending stay-at-home task is cooking. Since you have to eat anyway now is a great time to “spice up” your meals with a flair! It's not about just the taste of the fare you serve but also the aroma...

Remember as a child your grandmother's kitchen when she was baking bread, pies or cakes? That would draw me away from a good “Loony Toon” on the tube as quick as someone yelling FIRE! You can try new recipes, experiment with spices, find new methods of cooking create your own recipes... **As for doing the dishes, that's just a necessary evil that we all must endure...**

Speaking before of reading, you order a good book or even resurrect a book you've already read from a long time ago. You can also download audiobooks and magazines from several sources to include your local library. You can also get self-help books or DIY books to “broaden” you knowledge horizons.

If you have your kids or grand kids at home you can get them to read a book to you! That'd be good for both of you! You can even teach them how to journal or create a diary, there are many benefits to that.

Don't forget to pull out and dust off your old board games (or bored games as I would call them) or deck of cards. I've found a new zest for the game.

You can imagine the rest of the things I might speak of, we all have interests and many of us have hobbies that will keep us occupied. If you don't have a hobby maybe now is a good time to start one!

OPPORTUNITIES – “Lookin’ for the good stuff”

Being sequestered presents what some consider to be challenges. With that frame of mind, it's easy for a person to say it's too hard and just give up. I like to believe that there are no challenges, only opportunities.

To have this mindset you need to have a positive mental attitude (*PMA*) and “feed” that attitude as much as you can to sustain it. If you merely sit on your backside and worry, things will continue to worsen and stress will win.

Be – do – live positive! Some of the opportunities that we have now that we may never have thought we had begins with time. We now have time on our hands and with it we can:

- *Reconnect with our families at ground level. We can get to know one another better and become closer, even from afar via phone, internet and even the old reliable written letter!*
- *Write that novel you always wanted to. Let the juices of your imagination flow through your fingers at the keyboard.*
- *Learn new skills and enhance the ones you have to include cooking, crafts, art, etc.*
- *Become one with nature, enjoy the world around you by listening to the sounds, feeling the breeze, immersing yourself in the warmth of the sun, breathe in the fresh air. Getting back to the importance of a nap, you can always get the old hammock out!*
- *Adopt a pet and have a furry buddy to share the days and nights with.*
- *Try new things like varying **genre**'s of music, read the dictionary or, better yet, read the Bible.*



You can redefine who you are during this time, explore your life and reflect on what you have done to get you where you are now. Ask yourself, “Who am I and who do I want to be?”

Best of all, help others survive this “hiccup in life”. Look at your community and explore possibilities of what might thrive here, what people need, new and innovative ways of sales and marketing or manufacturing. Take the lead and follow your dreams, find answers to your questions and share them.

There is a world of opportunity around you, you just have to find them and cultivate the ideas.

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL! Never, ever give up! We are not alone even as we sit in solitary at home. Reach out, stay in touch, follow the common-sense rules, keep the faith and we will all make it through this to carry on. It may not be the same as it was so this is our chance to make it better than ever!

“I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.”

– Albert Einstein

NEWS & VIEWS GIVING YOU THE BLUES?

I for one am tired of the news these days. Yes, Covid19 is newsworthy but other things are happening in the world too.



What I’m trying to say is that the news is confusing and alarming to many due to the many conflicting and slanted opinions that are reported. I like the facts and just the facts. I would like to know the facts and not have this become commercialized or politicized.

“Whoever controls the media, the images, controls the culture.”

Allen Ginsberg

I’m tired of the conspiracy theories that are born of various interpretations of the facts. Most of these people receive their information from the media or the Internet and interpret it to what they think is being said. Well, sorry fella, but the ones putting in on the Internet or the media are doing the same thing. All in all the information we are receiving is susceptible to being flawed and creating panic instead of providing solid information and real facts.

Our leadership is doing what they can with the information they’re fed which may also be skewed by the personal interpretation of those providing it or political confusion to make one or the other look inept.

Everyone is looking for someone to blame. I believe that instead of spinning our wheels and spending our time fixing the blame we need to spend it fixing the problem! Let’s not play the game!

My suggestion to you is to stop watching the news or subscribing to what the theorist are saying. It will make you feel better and quite possibly lower your stress level... Take some time to smell the roses!



If all of this hype is causing mental anguish don’t keep it pent up, call for help. If you or someone you know are contemplating suicide or hurting themselves or others please call the **Crisis Hotline at 800-873-8255**

“The whole notion of journalism being an institution whose fundamental purpose is to educate and inform and even, one might say, elevate, has altered under commercial pressure, perhaps, into a different kind of purpose, which is to divert and distract and entertain.”

Tom Stoppard

ONE MORE MILITARY SERVICE SEAL?

We’ve really entered the future of military service now. We now have a USSF or United States Space Force!

Launched on December 20, 2019 the USSF organizes, trains, and equips space forces in order to protect U.S. and allied interests in space while providing space capabilities to the joint force.

The USSF is established within the Department of the Air Force, meaning the Secretary of the Air Force has overall responsibility, under the guidance and direction of the Secretary of Defense. The senior military member of the USSF is a four-star general known as the Chief of Space Operations (CSO). The USSF is also integrated into the Army and the National Guard.



President Trump released the conceptual seal (see below left) and tweeted it, but at this time it’s for internal use only and other use of it is discouraged. However,



there is another seal that seems to have been fielded as well. I have not yet seen what the USSF uniform will look like but what I have seen the utility uniform is the same as other services, camouflage.

From what I have read the word “space” has a broad meaning as it includes not just protection of our satellites and their infrastructure but also includes **Cyberspace**.

The forebearer of the USSF was originally established by the US Air Force on September 1, 1982 as the AFSPC (Air Force Space Command). Its primary mission included, but was not limited to, missile warning, launch operations, satellite control, space surveillance

The USSF is actively recruiting and a host of career opportunities are available. As far as I know they are not yet able to “beam” anybody anywhere and there is no officer whose name is “Spock”...

If you want to read more about our burgeoning United States Space Force go online to **www.spaceforce.mil**.

“Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its continuing mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before.” – Star Trek

PLANNING FOR THE FINAL TOMORROW

Jeffrey L. Gay, CVSO

WARNING! As important a topic that I believe this is it may be disconcerting to some readers. The choice to read it is yours.

Speaking of death and dying is often taboo among a family, I knew it was ours. However, it's something that we will all face inevitably, no how, no way that we're escaping it.



We're all driven by a "tomorrow" and barely entertain the thought of there not being a "tomorrow", or at least a "tomorrow" as we know it. Death is something we just don't want to be bothered with and are ultimately caught off-guard when it rears its ugly face...

"To the well-organized mind, death is but the next great adventure."

— J.K. Rowling

My father passed several years ago. He was one who never ever wanted to discuss such matters. Well, the time came and we had to cobble together all the important papers he had as well as write a fitting obituary without his help and without his "approval". As a family, it was a tough job doing this with the frustration of not being prepared combined with the emotions.

Without delving into the spirituality or cold science of the subject I am going to talk about the humanization of it and the mechanics of the finality as it pertains to those you leave behind/



Just like another adage we all know and use, "\$*** happens", we can also say "death happens", it is what it is. From that point forward, everything is beyond your intervention.

Being the pragmatist (or control freak) that I am I want to have my "story" told in the manner I lived it not through another person's perceptions. Not that they wouldn't do a good job but this would be your final document and you may want it written as only you would?

"Your story is the greatest legacy that you will leave to your friends. It's the longest-lasting legacy you will leave to your heirs."
—Steve Saint

PLANNING YOUR LEGACY

The first step is planning. There are various programs to help with that, the VA also has a program and each CVSO in the state has a workbook for you. The best part of this is that it's **FREE** and written in a manner that's easy to understand.



If you want a copy contact your local CVSO, or you may go on-line and download a copy or individual pages at www.cem.va.gov/cem/docs/factsheets/Planning_Legacy_Booklet.pdf

Many may think I'm talking about planning if you are suffering a debilitating disease and know that death may

be soon. That's not the case at all! Regardless of your age or health you need to prepare, be ready, it can happen any time. Illness, accident, homicide, they can come totally unexpected.

A QUICK OVERVIEW

DISCUSSION – Discuss it with your family. It's not a popular or fun topic but it's one that will help everyone understand when the time comes. There is also information available about how to walk with your children. A talk like this may also galvanize a family, bringing them closer knowing the facts so they can enjoy their time with one another.

A discussion does not have to be a solemn affair, it can be light, to and extent, and "as a matter of fact".

GATHER – Gather all of your important documents and place them in one spot such as a safe deposit box or at home, preferably in a fire safe. I put as many as possible in sheet protectors and in a large 3-ring binder. I tabbed the binder by type of document. These documents should include, but not limited to:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| • Titles/Deeds | • Passwords/PIN's |
| • Insurance | • Military Papers |
| • Bank Information | • Funeral Details |
| • Marriage License | • Burial Plot Deed |
| • Birth Certificate | • Key Register |
| • Will | • Combinations |

You can also keep your family photo albums there or other family photos as well as many keepsakes.

Not knowing where papers are located was the largest headache that I had to deal with. It was years later and I would find a document (insurance and banking) or two that would have been good to have at the time. In this age of automation having the correct passwords is vitally important!

REVIEW – Review and update the information you have gathered regularly so it is always current. Every time you make a change or move something be sure it's annotated and stored with everything else.

PLANNING – Every mission had to have a decisive plan for it to be successful. A "battle map" must be draw and a plan to follow must be written...



We can begin with a funeral director to discuss the ins and outs of the service, the burial and, of course, the costs. Leave the planning in their hands, they are good at it but make sure they know what your wishes are too.

You can also opt to plan your own "event" done the way you would like it done and with a flair of your own personality included or a favorite theme. I think this is where you put the "fun" in funeral.

However, you must keep in mind consideration for the feelings of your loved ones. Be sure they are on board with anything you want that's eccentric or out of the ordinary.

My sense of humor is somewhat eclectic and some things I see humor in may not be seen as appropriate by others. Of course, with my Military time and my time in Law Enforcement and Fire I've been part of many a "gallows humor" session. Although its wrong in so many ways it's also something that is used to diffuse feelings and stress that build with seeing and experiencing tragedy and tragic situations multiple times.

The term "celebration of life" is often used to describe a funeral. In my case I want a real celebratory time of epic proportions so I'm not easily forgotten!!!! OK, maybe not that much but I want to:

- Write my own "story" (Obit)
- Choose my own music
- Pick my own verse (bible and otherwise)
- Allow those in attendance to smile and laugh!

I want mine to be an event that even I would look forward enthusiastically to attend (in life, I'll be there otherwise anyway). I want to serve others in death as I have in life with jocularly and fellowship. Life can be just too serious to not have fun...

Maybe instead of an undertaker I should get a wedding or event planner!

IN CLOSING

I hope that some of the things I have said makes sense to you. Doing this can provide you, and your loved ones, with peace of mind and make it easier for everyone. It's just good common sense and there is no age limits as to when you should begin.

VA FUNERARY BENEFITS OVERVIEW

Following a Veteran's passing the family should contact their CVSO to see what's the Veteran is eligible for. Completing the paperwork takes less than a half hour.

A free marker for the existing head stone (Bronze, Granite or Marble) or Marble grave stone are available as well as the bronze Star Marker on which a flag is placed on special holidays.

Presidential certificates acknowledging the Veteran's service are available for each member of the family who would wish one.

All Veterans are provided a casket flag. In most cases this is ordered by the funeral home. If they haven't Flags may be picked up at your local US Post Office, you will need copies of the Veteran's discharge (DD form 214).

Veteran's and their Spouses are also authorized a plot or columbarium niche at the VA cemeteries across Minnesota. Locations are Camp Ripley (Little Falls), Duluth and Preston with a future one planned for the Redwood Falls area. For more information log into <https://mn.gov/mdva/memorials/stateveteranscemeteries/>

Also available is the Ft Snelling National Cemetery located in the Minneapolis area. For more information go to www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/ftsnelling.asp

There may be other benefits for the Veteran's spouse but these are on a case by case basis. Your CVSO can discuss how you might qualify and what you may receive.

GENERALLY SPEAKING...

A soldier runs up a hill and around a corner before slamming into an officer. "Where do you think you're going, son?"

"Sorry, Captain! It's crazy out there and the firefight was so heavy. I got scare and tried to go AWOL."

"Who you calling "Captain?" I'm a general!"

"Wow!" exclaimed the soldier, "I didn't realize I'd run that far back."



An F-16 comes careening down the runway. It's anything but smooth — fishtailing and leaving a line of burnt rubber and sparks behind it.

Tower: "Need any assistance, Airman?"

Pilot: "I don't know, Tower, we're not done crashing yet!"



JACKSON COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL



I'm sure there are many questions concerning the updating of the Jackson County Veterans Memorial in Lakefield.

It is still on our radar but with the Pandemic issue its moving slower than we'd like. We need to have another meeting to finalize plans and assign a schedule as well as procuring adequate funding.

More information will be provided as it's available or you can contact Jeff Gay at 507.847.4774.

Concerning the Veterans Memorial project in Jackson I have no current information.

MEMORIAL DAY

The year 2020 has already provided us with many challenges and affected greatly the way we live.



Gatherings, large or small, are discouraged and therefore many Memorial Day activities have been suspended or postponed.

This doesn't mean that we cannot celebrate those who have gone before us, actually Memorial Day is not a tangent, it is in our hearts and our memories and therefore always with us. Say a prayer, recall a memory, sing your praise, decorate the graves, help God bless America...

Although subdued, Memorial Day is still a time for the celebration of life and of who we are, proud Americans all and the home of the brave... Every day is Memorial Day!



WORDS & STUFF GLOSSARY

Embellish	make <i>(a statement or story)</i> more interesting or entertaining by adding extra details, especially ones that are not true. <i>(a.k.a. a "the one that got away fish Story")</i>
Webinars	a seminar, class or meeting conducted over the Internet
TED Talks / TEDx	a presentation essentially comprised of T echnology, E ntertainment & D esign that is generally not more than 18 minutes in length you can view via; the Internet
Podcast	A digital audio file made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device, typically available as a series
Sequestered	Isolated and hidden away
MDVA	MN Dept of Veteran Affairs
MN DEED	MN Department of Employment and Economic Development
SSAP	State Soldier's Assistance Program
Pandemic	an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population
Genre	a category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.
Pragmatist or Pragmatic	a person who is guided more by practical considerations than by ideals, an advocate of the approach that evaluates theories or beliefs in terms of the success of their practical application.
Gallows Humor	Grim and ironic humor in a desperate or hopeless situation.
Cyberspace.	a concept describing a widespread, interconnected digital technology. a.k.a. "the Internet"

MN Statute 197.447 – Definition of Veteran

The word "veteran" as used in Minnesota Statutes, except in sections 136F.28, 196.21, and 243.251, means a citizen of the United States or a resident alien who has been separated under honorable conditions from any branch of the armed forces of the United States after having served on active duty for 181 consecutive days or by reason of disability incurred while serving on active duty, or who has met the minimum active duty requirement as defined by Code of Federal Regulations, title 38, section 3.12a, or who has active military service certified under section 401, Public Law 95-202.

The active military service must be certified by the United States secretary of defense as active military service and a discharge under honorable conditions must be issued by the secretary.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please place these numbers close by in case you would ever need to call one. We hope that the need never arises but we also understand that it's a real possibility. Better to be prepared and to know where to call for help when help is needed...

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-8255

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE

1-800-522-4700



OR TEXT TO "838255"



DON'T FORGET – LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

www.facebook.com/JacksonCountyMNVeteranServices

Visit us online www.co.jackson.mn.us/veterans

COMMO CHECK!!!!!!
HOW COPY? OVER...
GOOD COPY! OUT!



GOIN' ON-LINE

These are web addresses which can help you, entertain you and keep you abreast of news, views and changes in benefits. Keep an eye out for additions to the list as we move forward!



NEWS & VIEWS

Marine Times	www.marinecorpstimes.com
Air Force Times	www.airforcetimes.com
Military Times	www.militarytimes.com
Military.COM	www.military.com
SOFREP News	https://sofrep.com/news/

BENEFITS & OTHER INTEREST

U.S. Veterans Affairs	www.va.gov
MN Dept. of Vet Affairs	https://mn.gov/mdva/
My Health-e Vet	www.myhealth.va.gov

SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

American Legion	www.legion.org
MN American Legion	www.mnlegion.org
Veterans of Foreign Wars	www.VFW.org
Disabled American Vets	www.DAV.org
AMVETS	http://amvetsnsf.org
Vietnam Vets of America	https://vva.org/
Military Order of Purple heart	https://moph.org

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCHES

US Army	www.goarmy.com
US Marine Corps	www.marines.mil
US Navy	www.navy.mil
US Air Force	www.airforce.com
US Coast Guard	www.uscg.mil
National Guard (Army/Air)	www.nationalguard.com

OF INTEREST TO MILITARY RETIREES

TRICARE Health	www.tricare.com *
DFAS MyPay (Finance)	https://mypay.dfas.mil *
Military Officers Assn.	www.moaa.org
DoD Lodging Site	www.dodlodging.net *
America's Warrior Part.	americaswarriorpartnership.org
Dental & Vision – FEDVIP	www.benefeds.com

OTHER LINKS PROVIDING INFO AND ASSISTANCE

Nat'l Archives (Records)	https://archives.gov/veterans
MACV (Financial/Legal)	www.mac-v.org
Minnesota LinkVet	https://minnesotaveteran.org
Senior Linkage Line	www.seniorlinkageline.com
Wounded Warrior Proj.	www.woundedwarriorproject.org
"Make the Connection"	www.MakeTheConnection.net
MN Military & Vet Exch.	www.mnme.us
Minnesota Help!	https://mnhelp.info/
Ctr for Disease Control	www.cdc.gov

VETERANS MALL, LODGING & VACATIONS

Armed Forces Exchange	www.aafes.gov *
Armed Forces Lodging	www.dodlodging.net/ *
AF Vacation Club	www.afvclub.com

"WHO YA GONNA CALL?!"

From time to time you need to call for help. Besides your local CVSO the numbers below may be helpful for you to call direct!



Resources for SW/WC MN Area Veterans

VAMC, Sioux Falls, SD 605.336.3230
(Toll Free) (800.316.8387)

(Press "0" or your party's extension to interrupt message)

A Nurse or Telephone Care 866.687.7382
Telephone Triage x7140
Patient Advocate x6688
Pharmacy Refills 855.560.1723
VA Billing Questions 866-347-2352

CBOC, Spirit Lake, IA 712.336.6400
CBOC, St James, MN 507.375.9670

MN Vet's Home, Luverne, MN 507.283.6200
Toll Free 877.588.8387

Vet Center, Sioux Falls, SD 605.330.4552
MACV, Mankato Office 507.345.8258

SW Ctr for Independent Living 507.532.2221
MDVA SW MN Higher Education Coordinator 507.537.7213

MDVA Tribal VSO, SW MN 507.637.1534

MDVA Veterans Linkage Line 888.546.5838
Senior Linkage Line 800.333.2433

VA Crisis Line/Suicide Line 1.800.273.TALK
press 1 (273.8255)

Defense Finance & Acc't. Svc 888.332.7411
TRICARE West Region 844.866.9378

MN Veterans Service Organizations' Dept. HQ's

The American Legion 866.259.9163
Veterans of Foreign Wars 651.291.1757
Disabled American Veterans 651.291.1212
Military Order Purple Heart 651.227.4456
Vietnam Veterans of America 651.224.6345

IDENTIFICATION CARDS/DEERS UPDATES

(Call for appointment and bring proper paperwork)

NG Armory, Mankato, MN 507.389.6219
100 Martin Luther King Drive Mon-Wed-Fri
114th FW, Sioux Falls, SD 605.988.5845
1201 W. Algonquin St.
196th MEB, Sioux Falls, SD 605.357.2900 or 2985
800 W. National Guard Drive
NG Armory, Montevideo, MN 320.269.9284 or 5180
711 S. 17th St. Mon-Fri / 9am-3pm

YOUR LOCAL
CVSO IS:

FINDING A LOCAL VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

MN Ass'n of Vet Service Officers www.macvso.org
Nat'l Ass'n of Vet Service Officers www.nacvso.org

Coronavirus (COVID 19) - Sioux Falls VA Health Care System Rules

Please help us limit the spread of COVID-19, the flu, and other illnesses by following these instructions. We thank you for your cooperation and support.

In order for the Sioux Falls VA to provide continuity of care to our Veterans, we are asking for your assistance. If you are tested for the Coronavirus (Covid-19) at a community healthcare facility or are contacted by the South Dakota CDC, please communicate to them that you receive care through the VA Healthcare System.

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System operations are adapting due to the emergence of the COVID-19 virus in our community to maintain a healthy environment for our Veterans, family members, and staff.

In an effort to confront emerging challenges related to COVID-19 transmission in our community, we are initiating emergency measures to prevent avoidable transmission of illness here within our medical center.

Visitor restrictions are in effect at ALL the Sioux Falls VA HCS facilities, this is inclusive of all CBOC's as well as the Main Hospital in Sioux Falls.

The following visitation safeguards are currently in place:

- *Outpatients should come to VA appointments alone, if possible. If assistance is needed for your visit, limit your guest to one adult family caregiver who is not sick.*
- *Inpatients are limited to one visitor per day.*
- *Visitors are not allowed to visit the Community Living Centers (CLC).*
- *Entrance into the Sioux Falls VA and Community Based Outpatient Clinics will be routed through the front door and the Emergency Department after hours; staff are screening people for symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath before entry.*

Calling Inpatients at the Sioux Falls VA

- *Visitors/guests can call to speak to inpatients by calling the operator at 605-336-3230 dial 0 and ask for the inpatient/Veteran by name to be transferred.*
- *All patients and visitors are reminded to wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after visitation / appointment.*

Allow extra time

We encourage all patients to allow for extra time to get to appointments with the required screening. We appreciate all support and understanding as we plan, prepare and respond to this emerging public health concern.

We will initiate screenings for all who enter our medical center buildings and clinics. The screenings will help ensure we are protecting our population of hospitalized Veterans, the teams that care for them, and families of all involved. We fully recognize this will cause some inconveniences, but the safety of those we care for must be the priority.

Here are a few things you can do to limit the impact of the inconvenience and help protect our hospitalized Veterans:

- *Ask your health care team if any of your future appointments can be conducted using our convenient "telehealth" appointments. Telehealth appointments allow you access to your care provider from the comfort and convenience of a location you chose, using your smart phone or tablet.*
- *When you come to our campus, allow extra time for screenings and navigating to your appointments.*
- *Wash your hands with soap and water multiple times a day or use Alcohol-based Hand cleaners.*
- *Try to not touch your eyes, nose or mouth as germs spread easily with contact.*
- *Get your flu shot.*

Any changes will be announced as soon as we have information to share.



A Reminder to Minnesota Veterans

If you have these symptoms:



The VA Health Care System asks that you call **FIRST** if feeling ill:

- **Minneapolis: 612-467-1100**
- **Fargo: 701-239-3700 extension 2319**
- **St. Cloud: 320-252-1670 or 800-247-1739**
- **Sioux Falls: 605-336-3230 or 605-336-5001**

The medical staff will advise you on next steps based on your symptoms. In a medical emergency, call **911**.

Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services along with Emergency Management in Jackson and Cottonwood Counties are coordinating their efforts to meet the essential needs of our communities. To request assistance getting food, medication, or other needs, Please call the **Essential Services Hotline at 507-847-6839**