

# THE POST

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## IN MEMORIAM



## FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMANDER

I wish to thank those who went to Kenney Nanfeldt's mothers wake. His family was very grateful for our presence.

We will need help on 3-4 May manning the booth at the Civil War Reenactment. We will also need help in manning the booth at Orland Days. If you can help out come and help us. These two events are among our important fund raiser's.

If you Wish to go to the Air Museum in Rantoul I must know how many adults and children will be going, so I can advise the people there as to how many guides will be needed. I must know no later then 9 May. We are scheduled to go to Rantoul on the 17 May. For more information contact Matt at (708) 308-5369.

Hope to see you at our next meeting.

## FROM THE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

In 2006 the U.S. Dept of Labor ranked Illinois dead last among 50 states at assisting Veterans get jobs". This seems to be part of a larger pattern concerning other related Veterans issues that surface in our state. To his credit the governor is actually trying to do something about this problem. My solution is that he should take the millions of dollars that he has removed from older Veterans health care and put it into a jobs Corp program for our younger Vets. At least it would stay in the Veterans family and these funds would not end up in some imaginary private school that has connections to a convicted felon.

Well you cannot have everything so let us see what Mr. Blagojevich has done to assist Veterans gain employment.

- 1) Tax credits for companies that hire Vets
  - 2) Aggressively promote Vets to employers
  - 3) Get colleges to count military experience for college credit
  - 4) Stiff penalties for companies that discriminate against Reservists and Nat'l Guardsman
  - 5) More job fairs for Vets
- (CONT ON PAGE 3)**

## ADJUTANT'S CALL AND CHAPLAINS CORNER

### ADJUTANT'S CALL

#### PLEASE PAY ANY UNPAID DUES ASAP.

Department will be sending out renewal forms on July 1, October 1, 2008, January 10, March 15, and May 1 2009. Often times if you have not yet paid your dues you will get one. Please make sure that any notice you get is addressed back to the Post at P.O. Box 413, Orland Park, IL

### Chaplains Corner

Donna Koerner

Maurice Fernandez

#### POST EVERLASTING

Sgt-At-Arms Jack Bath

**Bruce Sindewald**

**Corwin Funkey**

**Edward Von Clay**

R.I.P. fallen brothers

All our brothers and sisters far from home  
and in harm's way and their  
loved ones.



## POST NEWS



On March 4, 2008 Earl DeVries and Gene Sinclair were guest speakers at the Century Junior High School 7th grade classes.

On March 20, 2008 Matt Piwowarski, John Hennessy, Ray Manring, Gene Sinclair and other veterans were guest speakers at Sandburg High School. Their "American War Veterans Conference" was from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

**NICE JOB GUYS!!**

### **(CONT FROM PAGE 2)**

So let us see how he is doing. Employers get a \$600 tax credit for every qualified Veteran hired after Jan 2007. You can ask companies to hire Veterans and it would be nice if we had hiring preference in the state just like on the federal level.. However a bill that would have done just that was torpedoed in the state Senate when Sen Pres Jones insisted on adding to the legislation that "non violent criminals receive the same hiring preference as Veterans." Thank you Mr. Jones and Rev Meeks for lumping us together with individuals from that social stratification. Only a few schools substitute military skills for credit. There is a \$5000 dollar fine that can be levied against employers who discriminate against our reservist and guardsman. However there is no data readily available that describes how and when this Service Members Employment Act is being enforced. Finally there are more job fairs being held. Once again there is no data as to how many Veterans are actually being hired at these fairs and what kind of vendors are participating at these employment sessions. No doubt there are some very good companies showcasing their wares but also there are some "eye candy" and public relation showcasing by firms who want to have a presence at these fairs but do not have a pool of quality positions to offer. Not every Vet wants to work as a security guard for \$10 dollars an hour at "Pit Bull Protection Services".

Tammy Duckworth the current head of Illinois Dept of Veterans Affairs should get credit for trying to improve the quality of life for Veterans in the state. She has brought a level of energy and enthusiasm to her position. Plus Gov. Blagojevich must get positive reviews when he does something good. However when you insist on not funding or staffing Veterans Homes and leaving "men and women of honor" on waiting lists for years and taking dollars appropriated for those facilities and using them for your own personal political projects then that is a heavy rock indeed that you must slither out from under.

Dean Morrell

` Sr. Vice Commander

**Veterans in VA facilities not allowed to vote?**

**Should voter registration forms be available at VA facilities, like they are at numerous other public offices?**

**For at least four years, since the 2004 presidential election when a veteran, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., was the Democratic Party nominee, the Department of Veterans Affairs has blocked efforts to help U.S. soldiers register to vote at its facilities in all 50 states.**

**"This is politically motivated voter suppression," said Scott Rafferty, an attorney based in Washington, D.C., who has fought the Veterans Administration (VA) in federal courts since 2004 over the right to assist veterans, including homeless vets, to register to vote at the VA campus in Menlo Park, California. "The VA is making its open campuses, even those where hundreds of homeless and aging veterans live, First Amendment-free zones."**

**The issue has resurfaced, not merely on the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq and in the midst of a heated presidential campaign, but because the VA -- whose public affairs office did not answer telephone calls nor return requests to comment Monday -- apparently has also stonewalled requests by U.S. senators for an explanation.**

**"We write today to once again highlight our concerns about voter registration in VA facilities," began a March 6, 2008, letter from Sen. Diane Feinstein, D-Calif., chair of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, and Sen. Kerry, to James B. Peake, secretary of Veterans Affairs. "Nearly one year ago, your predecessor, Secretary Nicholson, was questioned about the lack of access to nonpartisan voter registration services for our nation's veterans. A response to this inquiry was never received."**

**The letter continued, noting that "despite this lack of response, we now understand that the VA has engaged in litigation against voter registration efforts by third-party groups in VA facilities. In light of the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals decision that voter registration groups are not allowed to register veterans, we strongly urge you to focus on what the VA can do to ensure all veterans have access to registration."**

**The litigation cited in the senators' letter refers to *Preminger v. Secretary of Veterans Affairs*, (Read here>><http://altlaw.org/v1/cases/1144875>)**

**the Menlo Park suit where the VA argued before federal district and appeals courts that, in essence, political activity, including First Amendment speech and voter registration efforts, should not occur in its facilities because those activities were not medical in nature and were political, Rafferty said, summarizing the litigation.**

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**The bottom line is the VA, as a federal agency, has the discretion under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, known as the Motor Voter Law, to determine if it would serve as a voter registration agency, according to election law experts. Under the NVRA, which mandated that state agencies from motor vehicle departments to welfare offices offer people the chance to register to vote, federal agencies can opt to register voters.**

**The Feinstein-Kerry letter asks the VA to consider that policy judgment, in contrast to fighting voting rights activists like Rafferty, whose client in the Menlo Park case filed its lawsuit in 2004 because nurses reportedly were deciding which veterans were mentally fit to vote. Those deemed able were assisted with voter registration, Rafferty said.**

**"It is an insult to those who have fought to spread democracy and freedom overseas to be denied the right to participate in their own democracy here at home,"** the senators wrote. "If each facility took a few simple steps to provide voter registration materials, the VA could do its part to guarantee access to voter registration."

The letter also criticizes the federal court ruling that said VA facilities are just medical, a position the VA took in court.

"We understand that the Court of Appeals seemed to indicate that the VA's role in assisting veterans was purely medical," the senators said. "However, the VA has a long and proud history of providing myriad services to veterans... providing them with the opportunity to become more actively involved in our democracy seems an appropriate role for the VA. The argument that providing access to voter registration at facilities would distract from the medical goals is as unfortunate as it is counterproductive."

Rafferty said the medical-only rationale was not just a political ruse; it was untrue. Across the country, VA facilities have been rented to social agencies working with the homeless, and used for university libraries, parks and even a minor league baseball stadium, he said. Rafferty said the "[Rolling Thunder](#)" veterans group in New Jersey, which has lead many pro-Republican demonstrations in Washington, regularly meets at VA facilities. Moreover, before the 2004 presidential election, California's Republican Party paid workers \$15 for each new voter registered, and actually registered "dozens of people" at the Menlo Park homeless center, Rafferty said.

The senators' letter also quoted leaders from veterans' groups encouraging the VA to adopt a policy to assist veterans with voter registration.

"Veterans know the price of freedom," said John Rowan, president of Vietnam Veterans of America. "While only one-quarter, at most, of the veteran population utilizes VA facilities for their healthcare, designating VA medical centers -- as well as community-based outpatient clinics and even regional offices -- as voter registration agencies should help more veterans have the opportunity to fulfill their civic responsibility which they have sacrificed so much to preserve for all of us, and vote."

"The Department of Veterans Affairs should serve as an example ensuring that every veteran that passes through its doors is afforded the opportunity to register and vote," said Randy L. Pleva, Sr., president of Paralyzed Veterans of America. "It is through the exercise of our franchise that we ensure the perpetuation of our democracy and serve as an inspiration to others throughout the world."

Neither Rafferty nor congressional staffers could estimate how many veterans might register to vote at VA facilities. However, there are hundreds of facilities across the country serving **more than 23 million veterans,** [according to](#) the VA's website.

<http://www.alternet.org/democracy/80024/>

**EDITOR'S NOTE: What the hell is going on?? Nobody decides whether you or I are mentally fit to vote but sometimes I wonder about you (JOKE) How can the greatest free country in the world (where anyone can vote if they can breathe) deny the opportunity to some of the very people who fought to make the vote possible. HERE IS ANOTHER ISSUE TO ADD TO THE VETERAN'S HOME ISSUE!!!**

The logo for the Senior Lifestyle Expo features the words "Senior Lifestyle" in a serif font above the word "Expo" in a larger, bold serif font. To the left of "Expo" are three curved lines of increasing size, resembling a stylized rainbow or a graphic element.

## Expo At A Glance

### The 13th Annual Senior Lifestyle Expo

**When**

Wednesday, September 3 and Thursday, September 4, 2008

**Where**

Drury Lane Theatre & Conference Center  
100 Drury Lane  
Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois

**Time**

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Expo News**

[Attendee News](#)

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[Press Releases](#)

[Area Agency on Aging News](#)

**Attractions (during show hours)**

- 100+ Product & Service Exhibitors
- Health & Wellness Area
- Educational & Fun Seminars
- Interactive Game Show Challenge
- Main Stage Entertainment
- Senior Idol Competition
- And Much More!

**Tickets**

\$3.00 at the door with no coupons

\$2.00 in advance for groups of 10 or more

**Bargain Pricing on Expo & Theatre Tickets**

The hilarious musical "The Boys From Syracuse" at The Drury Lane Theatre on Wednesday, September 3rd at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person, which includes one theatre ticket and one Expo ticket. Expo tickets are good for both days.

**Order Form**

[Click here](#) for theatre ticket and advance ticket order form.



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2008

### **Five Years of VA Health Care for Combat Veterans** *Peake: Honoring Commitment to Newest Combat Veterans*

WASHINGTON – Military veterans who served in combat since Nov. 11, 1998, including veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, are now eligible for five years of free medical care for most conditions from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This measure increases a two-year limit that has been in effect nearly a decade.

“By their service and their sacrifice, America’s newest combat veterans have earned this special eligibility period for VA’s world-class health care,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

The five-year deadline has no effect upon veterans with medical conditions related to their military service. Veterans may apply at any time after their discharge from the military -- even decades later -- for medical care for service-connected health problems.

The new provision, part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 signed by President Bush on Jan. 28, 2008, applies to care in a VA hospital, outpatient clinic or nursing home. It also extends VA dental benefits -- previously limited to 90 days after discharge for most veterans -- to 180 days.

Combat veterans who were discharged between Nov. 11, 1998 and Jan. 16, 2003, and who never took advantage of VA’s health care system, have until Jan. 27, 2011 to qualify for free VA health care.

The five-year window is also open to activated Reservists and members of the National Guard, if they served in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998 and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

#### **Five-Year Window 2/2/2/2**

Veterans who take advantage of this five-year window to receive VA health care can continue to receive care after five years, although they may have to pay copayments for medical problems unrelated to their military service. Copayments range from \$8 for a 30-day supply of prescription medicine to \$1,024 for the first 90 days of inpatient care each year.

For the latest news releases and other information, visit VA on the Internet at

<http://www.va.gov/opa>.

To receive e-mail copies of news releases, subscribe to VA’s list server at:

[http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opalist\\_listserv.cfm](http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opalist_listserv.cfm).

## THE HAND SALUTE FOR VETERANS

110th CONGRESS, 1st Session, S.1877, July 26, 2007 AN  
ACT

To amend title 4, United States Code, to prescribe that members of the Armed Forces and veterans out of uniform may render the military salute during hoisting, lowering, or passing of flag. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.*

**SECTION 1 CONDUCT BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS OUT OF UNIFORM DURING HOISTING, LOWERING, OR PASSING OF FLAG.**

Section 9 of title 4, United States Code, is amended by striking ‘all persons present’ and all that follows through the end and inserting ‘those present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.’

Passed the Senate July 25, 2007.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) today praised the passage by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. law to allow veterans and servicemen not in uniform to salute the flag. *Current law (US Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and servicemen not in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.* “The salute is a form of honor and respect, representing pride in one’s military service,” Senator Inhofe said. “Veterans and service members continue representing the military services even when not in uniform. I look forward to seeing those who have served saluting proudly at baseball games, parades, and formal events. I believe this is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain as role models to other citizens. Those who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to others.

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15545 S. 71st Ct., Suite 202  
Orland Park, IL 60462  
Email: matthewpiwowarski@yahoo.com  
www.chicagofinest.com

Phone: 708.645.8500  
Fax: 708.645.8098  
Cell: 708.308.5369

 

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**Allstate Insurance Company**  
7620 W 159th Street  
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**EVENTS ON THE HORIZON.**

- **May 19, 2008 Post Officers Meeting**  
8 PM at Veterans Center
- **May 28, 2008**  
**General Membership Meeting**  
8PM Veterans Center

**EVENTS TO COME**

- **May 3 and 4 Civil War Reenactment**  
details coming
- **May— Heroes Day at Christian Hill**  
**School**
- **May 17 Trip to Museum in Rantoul**
- **May— 22, 23, 24 Poppy Days**
- **May 26 Memorial Day at cemetery**  
**and Civic Center**
- **May 29 to June 1 Orland Days**
- **June 1 Orland Days Parade**

Federal Benefits Booklet (2008) for Veterans and Spouses is currently on line at: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)



Orland Memorial Post 111  
P.O. Box 413  
Orland Park, IL 60462