

ILLINOIS AMVETS

March 2009

Call to Action: Volunteer & help our vets today!

Volume 33 No. 3

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Illinois Veterans Service Representatives hold informative classes in a town near you

Are you, your members and the community interested in learning about VA benefits? We have trained Veterans Service Representatives (VSR) here to help!

Our Illinois AMVETS Veterans Service Representatives function as attorneys-in-fact for the veterans and families they represent. VSRs are there to counsel veterans on the full range of programs provided under federal, state and local benefit laws.

Our VSRs would like to offer their services in providing information about:

- New & re-opened VA claims
- Vet Center
- Employment services
- G.I. Bill programs
- Other valuable veteran services

We have VSRs waiting to schedule a time to come to your community and give an informational class about the above information. The following are guidelines in order to create a town hall meeting in your area:

1. Call Crystal Blakeman to arrange a date and time, must be two months out.
2. Crystal will coordinate a neutral community location (i.e. town hall, library, community center).
3. All town hall meetings will be held on Wednesday or Thursday evenings from 6-9 PM.
4. Invitations will be sent to guest speakers .
5. An Illinois VSR will be assigned to run the meeting.

On February 11th, the first Town Hall Meeting was held at the Community Park Center in Jacksonville. The meet-



ing was successful, with a number of veterans being educated about various programs and claims services that can assist them and their families. This meeting was ran by Lead VSR Michael Ragusa and VSR Robert Dartt. In addition, guest speakers included Joan Ryan, Administrator of Veterans Education, and Richard Martin, representative of the Vet Center.

Please call Crystal Blakeman at (217) 528-4713 to schedule a date and time for one of our accredited VSRs to hold a town hall meeting.



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AMVETS State Headquarters
2200 S. 6th St,
Springfield, IL 62703

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

2008-2009
AMVETS
Department of Illinois

State Officers:

Commander: Bill Scheffel
Senior Vice Cmdr.: Rudy Spaulding
Junior Vice Cmdr.: Bill Buckner

Headquarters Staff:

Executive Director: Len Baumgartner
Membership Director: Keith Wetherell
Programs Director: Crystal Blakeman
Public Relations Director/Editor: Ashley Murphy
Executive Assistant: Katie Van Dyke

AMVETS Veterans Service Reps:

Regional Director: Richard Miller
NSO: Jose Garcia
Accredited VSO: Connie Deleonardis
Located at the Chicago VA Regional Office
312.980.4256

Illinois VSRs:

Mary Ann White
Hines VA Hospital
708.202.2564

Bob Dart
VAMC Danville
217.554.4838

Harold Dukala
VAMC North Chicago
847.688.1900 ext. 84138

Rob Hookham
VAMC Marion
618.997.5311 ext. 54743

Michael Ragusa (Lead VSR)
Scott Air Force Base
309.235.5090

George Sebastian
VA Outpatient Clinic Peoria
217.494.1454

Joel Thompson
Auburn Gresham Clinic
773.651.7459

AMVETS State Headquarters
2200 South Sixth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
217.528.4713
www.ilamvets.org



COMMANDER'S CORNER



Dear AMVETS,

It is three quarters of the way through the year and the membership is doing fine. The programs are ahead of last year. So let's build on the good work already accomplished and get to 100% on membership and programs. Furthermore, if your post does com-

munity service this can be reported to state and national headquarters. By reporting these activities veterans will be helped in many ways.

National held their first leadership conference in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee on January 23rd-24th, 2009. With about seventy-five people in attendance they talked about meeting protocol, parliamentary procedure, dealing with people, understanding the business and what are the legal implications [constitution and bylaws provision were reviewed]. They plan to have this every year covering different topics each year.

Congratulations to Division IV on having 100% of their post's reporting in this program's reporting period. A great job done by the Division IV

Officers and all the Divisions can do this by just calling all the posts and giving them a friendly reminder about reporting.

The National Commander was here last month visiting posts throughout the state, and he attended the S.E.C. in Springfield.

If there is something going on at your Post and you would like for me to attend, please contact me and I will make my best effort to attend.

The AMVETS was well represented at the Four Chaplains dinner that was held at Hines VA Medical Center, on February 1st, 2009.

So far this year has been very enjoyable and a learning experience. From visiting several posts to all the schools I have attended it has been my pleasure representing this great organization.

Yours in AMVETS Service,

Commander. William. Scheffel

Find an AMVETS Post near you!

Division I

Post 1, 7, 13, 17, 18, 34, 36, 37, 47, 243, 247, 252 & 326 -Chicago
Post 5-Skokie
Post 24 - Berwyn
Post 43- Burnham
Post 66-Wheeling
Post 97-Oak Park
Post 99- Brookfield
Post 192- Brid-geview
Post 268-Glenwood
Post 277- Stream-wood

Division II

Post 26-Depue
Post 32- Freeport
Post 35-Waukegan
Post 90-Dekalb
Post 91-Hampshire
Post 103- Aurora
Post 123-Dixon
Post 145-East Moline
Post 167-Sterling
Post 180 - Princeton
Post 202- Elgin
Post 245- Cary Post
255-Buffalo Grove
Post 269-Wood-stock

Division III

Post 8-Knoxville
Post 16 - Litchfield
Post 29-Taylorville
Post 44 - Pana
Post 55-Mount Olive
Post 61- Chatham
Post 64- Peoria
Post 71-Lincoln
Post 76- Ursa
Post 77- Chillicothe
Post 94-Springfield
Post 100-Jackson-ville
Post 104-Quincy
Post 169-North Pekin
Post 179-Greenview
Post 235- Pekin
Post 256-Spring-field
Post 257-Spring-field

Division IV

Post 3- Champaign
Post 14-Clinton
Post 19-Hoopeston
Post 30-Ottawa
Post 41-Marshall
Post 52-Fisher
Post 53 - Morris
Post 67- Beecher
Post 75-Danville
Post 84 - Crete
Post 107-Manteno
Post 113-Bradley
Post 115 - Pontiac
Post 120-Streator
Post 133-Paris
Post 270-Bloom-ington
Post 276 - Elliott
Post 278-Colfax
Post 312-Streator

Division V

Post 4-Mt. Vernon
Post 11 - Cairo
Post 31 - Marion
Post 33 - Palestine
Post 40 - Effingham
Post 51-Granite City
Post 70-Vandalia
Post 101-Centralia
Post 132-Metropolis
Post 140-Greenville
Post 148-Walton-ville
Post 149-West Frankfort
Post 156 - Waterloo
Post 161-Belleville
Post 204-Madison
Post 267-Jerseyville

For more information about one of the posts listed near you, visit www.ilamvets.org!

MEMBERSHIP

PROGRAMS

Dear AMVETS,

According to the December 2008 membership numbers, 18 posts have achieved 100% and 26 posts are in the 90% to 99% range. So, half of our posts have been working hard on membership. That is not to say the other posts have not been working to achieve 100%, they just did not make it by the end of December. Renewal is the key!



Illinois has over a million veterans and the current war has added another 65,000 new veterans to that total. Illinois AMVETS has just over 10,500 members. We have a rich field of new members that has not been touched.

We have two posts that have not revalidated for this year. March 1st, 2009 these posts will lose their Charters. There are several other posts with less than 10 members. These posts need to get out and recruit new members. It is very difficult to start a new post, so we need to work hard to keep all our posts.

And, on the other hand if your post is NOT working for the veterans in your area, you are not helping the veterans or the AMVETS.

With 3,000 plus Illinois National Guard stationed in Afghanistan, keep up with the news of veteran's families in your area that need assistance. Do not wait for someone to ask for assistance. As AMVETS, we need to first to offer help.

A week after a guardsman left in September for Afghanistan, his wife had a problem with the furnace and the kitchen range. She contacted him and explained the problem. The guardsman called Mr. Ron Dufrane about the problems. Mr. Dufrane worked on the problem and then contacted Post 52. I was able to give Mr. Dufrane information about emergency state funds available through the Lieutenant Governors' office. So, between the VFW, the Lieutenant Governors' office, Post 3 and Post 52 we paid the bills for a new furnace and kitchen range.

I just received an e-mail from my son in Afghanistan about a guardsman's house that burned in Oakwood, IL. (I had already read the story in the local newspaper). One of our members knows the family and we are already working to find out what help is needed.

These are the kinds of things we, as AMVETS, need to be doing. Do not wait for the call for assistance, be proactive.

Build our membership by using our successes.

Yours in AMVETS service,

Rudy Spaulding
Senior Vice Commander for Membership

Dear AMVETS,

According to National, we are sitting pretty at 93% (as of January 26, 2009). Here is a list of posts who have not reported:

DIV. 1 - #37, and 252
DIV. 2 - # 123, 167 and 255
DIV. 3 - # 29
DIV. 5 - #11, 31, 70 and 156



Great job DIV. 4 (All posts reported)

Think spring! It's right around the corner.

Valentine's Day: A day to express your love to your spouse, family, friends, neighbors, your country and so on. Let this day be a reminder to us that this is the way we should approach everyday throughout the year. An expressed warm thought, like a ripple in the water, can send out numerous positive feelings to those that we encounter on a daily basis.

On the third Monday in February, we honor all our Presidents. This year with the election of our newest President, let's give him our full support, and pray for his success.

St. Patrick's Day: With the Irish heritage of wearing green, and all other ethnic groups, Americans, one and all working together is what made this country. Let's keep it that way. While wearing of the green, forget not the Red, White and Blue.

Our scholarship program is now in full bloom. The cut-off date for all honors and awards is April 1, 2009. POST COMMANDERS, please submit your nominee for post AMVET of the year. No write-up is necessary. Nominate someone in your post who has done the most to promote AMVETS.

January 23rd and 24th, I attended a leadership conference sponsored by the National Department in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The first day focused on the National Structure, Protocol and Parliamentary Procedure. On the second day we covered the Constitution and Bylaws. The guest speaker Donnie Tate, who is an instructor at Tusculum College, also gave a workshop on Dealing with People. This workshop was very informative and, in my opinion, beneficial.

In closing, thank you again for your continued support.

Yours in AMVETS Service,

William Buckner
Senior Vice-Commander of Programs

MindLeaders

AMVETS has partnered with MindLeaders to offer free online courses in various areas of education. MindLeaders is an employee and individual performance-improvement company with nearly 25 years of experience in the technology-based, self-paced training field. We provide personalized learning that supports organizational success. Our e-learning tools cover topics ranging from networking in an enterprise environment to personal use of the pc and from healthcare privacy issues to business skills.



MindLeaders solutions include:

- The PLuS service, which provides Personal Learning Plans created for people by people
- Over 2,000 interactive courses to give you the learning resources you need
- Unmatched customer service to help you and your training program succeed
- A variety of tools — including Instant Mentoring, TechLabs, and Reference library — to create a total learning solution
- Courses for those seeking professional certifications and Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Courses in Business, Technical, Food Service, Health and Safety and much more.
- A tool to help membership.

To learn more, please contact Crystal Blakeman, Programs Director, at 217-528-4713.

Visit www.mindleaders.com for more information!

Diabetes Information to Keep You In The Know with Dr. Chapman-Novakofski

When should you go to the emergency room if you have diabetes?

First of all, remember that if you have diabetes you should have some kind of identification like a diabetes bracelet or pin. That way the emergency room personnel will know you have diabetes even if you can't tell them.

Both high and low blood glucose may be a reason to visit the emergency room. It really depends on how high or low your blood glucose is, and how you feel.



Karen Chapman-Novakofski, RD, PhD

University of Illinois
for the
Illinois AMVETS Diabetes
Education Research Program

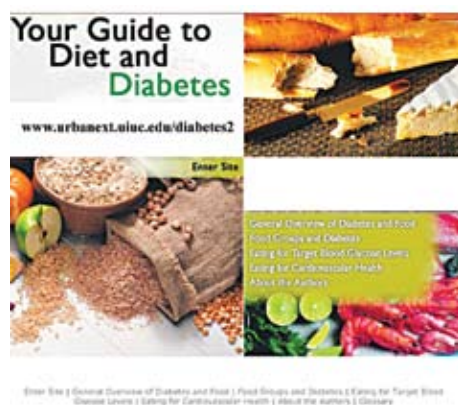
If you have checked your blood glucose and it is 240 mg/dl or higher, you should check your urine for ketones. Ketones can build up when blood glucose becomes this high. They can change the pH or acidity of your blood and have a bad effect on you. Extreme cases of high blood glucose with ketones can result in coma or death. The worst part is you can't feel your blood glucose rising. Symptoms of high blood glucose include:

- Increased thirst
- Increased urination
- Deep and/or rapid breathing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fruity smelling breath from the ketones

Having your blood glucose fall too low can also be a reason to go to the emergency room. Technically blood glucose below 60 mg/dl is low blood glucose (hypoglycemia). However, this can vary from person to person. Symptoms of hypoglycemia include:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Lack of coordination
- Shakiness or trembling

Taking a glucose tablet, orange juice, or hard candy may help alleviate symptoms. If this doesn't help or the person can't swallow, and emergency room visit is needed.



Mt. Vernon Mayor Mary Jane Chesley (center) proclaimed December 6, 2008, as "AMVETS White Clover Day" in Mt. Vernon. There to represent AMVETS Post 4 were White Clover Chairman Tom Piper (left) and Post 4 Commander Ava Carpenter (right).



Department Commander Bill Scheffel presented the Riders Charter to Chapter 169's President Bob Dant on January 16, 2009. Also shown are members front - Rose Connolly, Department President Leslie Nell, and Debby Dant. Middle are members Leo Harvey, Jr. and Lori Freeman. Back row are members Jon Worlow, Terry Perkinson, Barry Freeman, and Bill Martin.



Department Commander Bill Scheffel (right) presented Post 18 Commander Wayne Grzbowski with the Quality Post of the Year award.

BEER SALES - SPRINGFIELD STATE FAIR

Please be notified that Tom Lebro is the Springfield State Fair Beer Sales Coordinator. The Illinois State Fair is August 14-26. Please submit your time and shift requests by April 15th to:

Tom Lebro
8342 Saint James Drive
Moro, IL 62067

The CVA will only pay \$56/night per room for those who are over 100 miles away. Thank you for your cooperation, and if you have any questions, please contact Mr. Lebro at 618-888-2278.

Please print clearly!

GREEN for the GREEN HATS

Recruit New Members and Win a gift card



For every 25 new (not renewals) members recruited during the below time period, the member will receive a \$25 gift card from either Bass Pro Shops or Home Depot.

The contest is open to "Green Hats" only.

Open to all - recruit 5 new members win a membership challenge coin



November 11, 2008 - May 31, 2009

see Membership tab at www.amvets.org for contest details



Local Spotlight: Post 8

To celebrate Catholic Schools Week, on Jan 28th Costa School Development Director Bill Kisler invited Post 8 Amvets to present the colors for students and answer prepared questions they have for veterans.

AMVETS attending were Commander Dredge and Misterys Harlan, Cowan, McGee, Brady, Bantz, McGill, Boydston, Godsil and Miles.

Costa School purchased an engraved brick to be part of the Lincoln Park Veterans Memorial, at Galesburg, in honor of Catholic Schools week and AMVETS Post #8. Receiving the memorial from Mr. Kisler is Mr Jack Harlan of the AMVETS.

Great job, Post 8!





Ladies Auxiliary 4, Mt. Vernon, presented a Target Dottie grant in the amount of \$500 to Kaleb Scott Drew. Left to right: PDP Bonnie Russell, Kathy McMurrin, Kaleb Drew, Michelle Drew, Brad Drew, Donna Bryant, Lucy Patterson and Betty Dixon. Kaleb is autistic and they are in need of an autistic dog, which will help Kaleb in everyday life.



Post 26 member Arlin Schmutz (center) and Commander Russ Stinar (right) distributed Christmas gifts to all veterans at the Orchard View Nursing Home in Bureau County. Shown here is resident and Post 26 member Dave Olson receiving his gifts.



Department Commander William Scheffel (second left) and Department President Leslie Nell (third left) visited Post 64 in Peoria for a visit. They are shown with members of Post 64.

Don't Miss Out on Getting Recognition with Honors & Awards!

Honors & Awards

The purpose of the Honors and Awards is to recognize an individual, a Post, Ladies Auxiliary, or civilian firm for the greatest service/s to Veterans and/or AMVETS.

Rules and Regulations

1. NO ENTRIES will be accepted at the Department Convention for any awards.
2. Awards are to be submitted to State Headquarters ON or prior to April 1st of each year.
 - o To ensure that a Post entry has been received, at Headquarters, send all nominations and entries for all awards certified mail with a return receipt requested.
3. Entries may be sent in to State Headquarters starting in March.
4. A statement of facts must accompany each entry as specified on the form.
5. All entries will be judged on the statement of facts listed in detail, by both the Post and Auxiliary activities.
6. All entries must be verified and signed by the Commander and Adjutant of the Post who will assume responsibility for its authenticity.
7. All winners will be announced at the Department Convention.
8. Entry forms may be reproduced or obtained from State Headquarters.
9. No member of the committee will judge an entry that is submitted from their own Post and/or Ladies Auxiliary.
10. Winners will not be notified until sometime during the State Convention.
11. The winning Post/s and Auxiliary/s must be in attendance at the State Convention.
12. Mail entries and nominations to:

**AMVETS Department of Illinois
State Headquarters
Attn: Honors & Awards
2200 South Sixth Street
Springfield, IL 62703**

Contact Crystal Blakeman for more details.

Look across the page for an award form for Post AMVET of the Year & Outstanding AMVET of the Year!

**Submission Deadline:
April 1**

MIKE'S MIC: A GIFT OF LOVE

Dear AMVETS,

The long and winding road many times ends at the front door of the homes of aging Veterans. It is a door that may remain open for numerous years, a door many of us have already entered. We entered the door not sure of what was on the other side. We entered the door unsure but entered willingly to care for our loved one. For those of us who have become responsible for providing extended care to a loved one for weeks, months and possibly years, free time can become a rare and much-needed commodity. Consider our Veteran population as we go further into the 21st century. Veterans are aging. Many face disabilities that leave them in need of an increasing amount of care – care that doesn't require hospitalization – care that, if purchased, would be far beyond the budget of many elderly people. For many, the challenges of caring for a loved one are part of daily life. Care giving is a difficult, demanding job that no one is equipped to do alone.

Getting help is essential for the care givers health and their resilience is critical for their loved one. No one knows better than AMVETS and Auxiliary members that the cost of health care, whether through the VA or the private sector, continues to grow and hospital stays are becoming shorter and shorter. Aging spouses who most likely face or will face infirmities of age are caring for many veterans at home. More and more veterans are now being cared for in their homes. These veterans often cannot be left alone due to either their medical or mental condition. The spouse, family member or friend provides total care 24 hours per day, seven days a week. There is no trip to the mall or beauty shop, no lunch out with a friend. Even the required trip to the supermarket is rushed. Often, the caregiver's own health care needs are neglected due to the fact their loved one who cannot be left alone. When care givers are asked what can be done to assist them, they most often reply that a break for a few hours without worrying about their loved one being alone would be most appreciated. They need to get away – have lunch, shop with a friend, go for a walk, enjoy a movie, see their doctor – they need respite care.

Respite care provides short term breaks that relieve stress, restore energy and promote balance in life. Being a care giver for family members or friends may be difficult, but there are many respite care options and strategies that the care giver may not be aware of. Family members and friends may be able to help out while the care giver runs an errand, take a break or even go on vacation. However, just as the burden of care giving is often more than one person can handle – it can also be a tough process for families

to share. Even the healthiest families can be severely stressed by ongoing care and the division of labor is frequently lopsided.

Respite care is short-term care for individuals care for at home by family or friends. It allows the caregiver time away while the loved one is cared for by someone else. Respite care isn't covered by Medicare and is rarely covered by private insurance.

A respite care program is an excellent Post or Auxiliary project. I encourage Posts and Auxiliaries to become involved and learn more about respite care. Information is often provided by local VA Medical Centers, senior citizens organizations, local hospitals and social service agencies. (Veteran Benefits: The VA provides inpatient respite coverage for up to 30 days per year for qualified Veterans. In addition, when war-time vets care for their spouses, funding for in-home services are available on a state-by-state basis.) Once your Post decides to provide respite care, ensure that Post or Auxiliary volunteers will commit the time needed to provide respite care. Care givers look forward to the brief time off provided by a respite care volunteer. If no one in the Post or Auxiliary can volunteer, encourage support and participation by donating some funds to a private pay respite care program.

Many care givers feel they are alone and are overwhelmed by caring for their loved one. Many times tears are the only relief from the demands of care giving. They are not aware of the support and assistance that is available to them. As AMVET & Auxiliary members, we know the great value of helping veterans and their families. You and I have a wonderful opportunity to provide assistance to both the caregiver and the loved one in need of extended care by volunteering to provide respite care in our communities. I can also assure you that your gift of respite care will provide far more than you may imagine and promote wonderful new friendships too.

Yours in AMVETS service,

Michael W. Ragusa
Lead VSR



VETERANS ISSUES

Governor Pat Quinn Names New Agency Chief: Dan Grant to head Department of Veterans' Affairs

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn announced the appointment of Iraq War veteran Dan Grant as Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. Grant had been senior policy adviser for military and veterans affairs in the Office of the Lt. Governor.

"Dan Grant has the leadership ability and experience to head this important department," said Governor Quinn. "He will work tirelessly to support the brave men and women who have served our country."

Grant, a West Point graduate in 2002, joined the Lt. Governor's staff in November 2008. An organizer and advocate, he was instrumental in developing and supporting legislation to benefit the Illinois military and veteran communities. Grant spoke at countless military and veterans events across Illinois, including public service forums, community meetings and intergovernmental panels. He currently lives in Chicago with his wife, Stacey, and daughter, Adelyn.

"I am honored and humbled that Governor Quinn has nominated me to lead the Department of Veterans' Affairs," said Grant. "I am excited by the opportunity to help an even greater number of our service members and continue to serve our veterans and their families."

Grant worked with members of the Illinois legislature and testified at hearings to help secure passage of a bill that ensured interest payments were made on delayed Line-of-Duty Benefit payments to bereaved military families (SB 2489.) He also spearheaded legislation to establish the Task Force on Service Member and Veterans Education and the Military Family Interstate Compact Implementation Statute Drafting Advisory Committee (HB 5368.)

Rising from platoon leader to captain, Grant led 28 men in a combat arms platoon during a year-long deployment in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served throughout the Sunni Triangle in Bayji, Samarra, Balad, and Tikrit in a wide range of roles, including leading a 120 person team of soldiers, local Iraqi's, U.S. contractors, and coalition allies in the excavation, collection, and destruction of 3 million pounds of enemy ammunition during a 120 day mission. •

**FOR DAILY UPDATES,
VISIT:**

WWW.VA.GOV

OR

WWW.VETERANS.ILLINOIS.GOV

VETERANS ISSUES

Duckworth Tapped for VA Assistant Secretary

WASHINGTON (Feb. 3, 2009) - President Barack Obama has announced his intent to nominate L. Tammy Duckworth, director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, to be the Assistant Secretary of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

“Effective communications with Veterans and VA’s stakeholders is key to improving our services and ensuring Veterans receive the benefits they deserve,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Tammy Duckworth brings significant talent, leadership and personal experience to this important work.”

As assistant secretary, Duckworth will direct VA’s public affairs, internal communications and intergovernmental relations. She also will oversee programs for homeless Veterans, consumer affairs and special rehabilitative events.

Duckworth was appointed director of the state Veterans office in Illinois in 2006. In previous testimony before Congress, she expressed her commitment to Veterans and the need for transformation of the Department. “The VA system faces new challenges as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” She also noted “the patient profile is changing. More wounded soldiers are surviving very serious injuries.”

She is serving as a major in the Illinois National Guard and was previously deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom where, as a captain, she was assistant operations officer for a 500-soldier aviation task force. She also served as a logistics officer and company commander. As a helicopter pilot flying combat missions in 2004, she suffered grave injuries when her helicopter was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, losing both legs and partial use of one arm.

Her previous managerial experience includes coordinating the Center for Nursing Research at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, and working for Rotary International’s Asia-Pacific region from 2002 to 2004.

Duckworth earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Hawaii and a master’s degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Born in Thailand, she is the daughter of a U.S. Marine who fought in Vietnam. She is married to Iraq war Veteran and National Guard officer, Major Bryan Bowlsbey. •

Shinseki Sworn In, Vows 21st Century Service to Veterans

WASHINGTON (Jan. 21, 2009) - Retired Army Gen. Eric K. Shinseki took the oath of office today as the Nation’s seventh Secretary of Veterans Affairs, assuming the leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs following Tuesday’s confirmation by the Senate.

“The overriding challenge I am addressing from my first day in office is to make the Department of Veterans Affairs a 21st century organization focused on the Nation’s Veterans as its clients,” Shinseki said.

Shinseki plans to develop a 2010 budget within his first 90 days that realizes the vision of President Obama to transform VA into an organization that is people-centric, results-driven and forward-looking.

Key issues on his agenda include smooth activation of an enhanced GI Bill education benefit that eligible Veterans can begin using next fall, streamlining the disability claims system, leveraging information technology to accelerate and modernize services, and opening VA’s health care system to Veterans previously unable to enroll in it, while facilitating access for returning Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans.

Shinseki, a former Army Chief of Staff, takes the reins of a 284,000-employee organization delivering health care and financial benefits to millions of Veterans and survivors under a \$98 billion budget authorized this year through networks of regional benefits offices and health care facilities from coast to coast.

Born in 1942 on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, Shinseki graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1965. He served two combat tours and was wounded in action in Vietnam. He served with distinction in Europe, the Pacific and stateside, eventually becoming the Army’s senior leader from June 1999 to June 2003.

Retired from military service in August 2003, Shinseki’s military decorations include three Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts.

Shinseki succeeds Dr. James B. Peake as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. •

Secretary Shinseki Announces Choice for Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON (Jan. 30, 2009) - Today, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki praised President Barack Obama’s intent to nominate W. Scott Gould as next Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Gould is currently vice president for public sector strategy at IBM Global Business Services and a former intelligence officer in the naval reserve. He has public service experience at both the departments of Commerce and Treasury.

Shinseki said, “Scott and I share a reverence for those who have served in uniform. He is fully committed to fulfilling President Obama’s vision and my goals for transforming the Department of Veterans Affairs into a 21st Century organization, and he understands the fundamentals that will drive that transformation: Veteran-centric, results-oriented and forward looking.”

Shinseki further said that Gould possesses a unique and wide-ranging set of skills in information technologies, acquisition, budget, human resources and leading the modernization of large, complex organizations. “Scott’s expertise in these areas, as well as his broad experience in the public sector, the private sector and the military, will prove invaluable for better serving our Veterans,” Shinseki added.

Gould worked in the public sector as the chief financial officer and assistant secretary for administration at the Commerce Department and deputy assistant secretary for finance and management at the Treasury Department from 1994 to 1999. As a White House Fellow, he worked at the Export-Import Bank of the United States and in the Office of the White House Chief of Staff.

Prior to his job at IBM, he was chief executive officer of The O’Gara Company, a strategic advisory and investment services firm, and chief operating officer of Exolve, a technology services company.

As a naval reservist, Gould served at sea aboard the guided missile destroyer Richard E. Byrd and as assistant professor of naval science at Rochester University. He was recalled to active duty for both Operation Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom as a naval intelligence reservist.

During President Obama’s campaign and after his election, Gould was co-chair of the National Veterans Policy Team, Obama for America, and co-chair of the Veterans Agency Review Team for the Presidential Transition Team. •

LADIES AUXILIARY

From the Desk of Leslie Nell: Ladies Auxiliary Department President

Dear Ladies Auxiliary members:

Soon we will be welcoming in the signs of spring. Everyday will grow a little warmer and soon the outdoors will start blooming with color. Mother Nature is starting to come alive once more. The early flowers of the season will even poke through those possible last few dregs of snow that may come our way. It will feel so good to be able to put on a light coat instead of the layers we have had to put up with these past few months. This is the month that we set the clocks ahead and the days will start to get longer.

The 17th is St Patrick's Day. In the beginning it was a Catholic holy day, but has since become a day of celebration of the Irish and their culture. Ironically, St. Patrick was not born Irish, but was born in Scotland or Roman England in 309AD or 373AD. His given name also was not Patrick, but probably Maewyn Succat. He was kidnapped and sold into slavery in Ireland. He eventually escaped and joined a monastery in France where he spent 12 years in training. After having a dream that the Irish were calling him back to their land he went and converted many of the Gaelic Irish. He was arrested many times by the Druids, but escaped each time and was able to establish monasteries and schools throughout the countryside. He is said to have driven all of the snakes out of Ireland and into the sea. Because of all this he became legendary and the legends continued to grow. Over the years the legends and facts about St. Patrick are inseparably combined. He died on March 17, 461AD and since then this day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day. So I say the luck of the Irish be with you and enjoy.

March is PAWS with a Cause month for our Auxiliaries. This is one of our National Programs. Through donations from our members, Auxiliaries and Departments this national pro-

gram helps sponsor trained dogs which are provided by the PAWS with a Cause Foundation for hearing impaired and mobility handicapped people. Please keep them in mind when thinking of projects for the month or the proceeds from a fundraiser if they haven't been earmarked already. You could, with the permission of your AMVETS, put a jar out at the post for donations.

The scholarship applications have been sent to your local high schools. Please, those who know high school seniors encourage them to check out the applications and see if they meet the eligibility requirements. If they do and they are planning on continuing their education have them complete the application and send them in by the deadline. Have them check with their Guidance Counselors or they can always check out the websites for additional information. The National websites are www.amvetsaux.org, www.amvets.org or our state site is www.ilamvets.org. Being awarded a scholarship would be extremely helpful for any family, but if a father or mother is currently deployed this would be extremely welcomed.

In these troubled economic times let's not forget our Veterans and our Military. Many of our Veterans are on fixed incomes and have little or no money left at the end of the month. Try to see if there is something that you can do. Take them some meals, offer them a ride to the store, to church or for a doctors visit instead of them possibly having to take a cab. Check with your local Veterans center or Assistance office and see where else you might be able to help. As for our Military, donate to the USO or a support group in your area. They need to know they are not forgotten them. If you have internet access go to www.anysoldier.com for addresses



of soldiers or check www.amil-lionthanks.com. These sites will let you know how you can write to our servicemen and women. Also, keep clipping those coupons and sending them to the military installations. Let them know that we are Supporting Those...Defending America.

In closing I am going to leave you with an old Irish saying:
A world of wishes at your command
God and his angels close at hand
Friends and family their love impart
And Irish blessings in your heart.

Go mbeannai Dia duit
(May God be with you)

Leslie Nell
Department President
309.346.2175
lnell_1955@hotmail.com

*We waited Together,
Now Let's Work Together!*
Visit the National Ladies
Auxiliary Website:
www.amvetsaux.org



Illinois AMVET & Auxiliary Department Convention 2009 Registration Form



Convention Dates: June 11-14, 2009
Registration & Payment:
Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Hotel
 701 East Adams Street
 Springfield, IL 62703
 217.544.8800
Convention Hosts: Post 169
Registration & Payment:
Make checks payable to AMVETS #169
Mail Registration to: John or Susan Sisler
 PO Box 262
 Groveland, IL 61535
 309.387.6167
ssisler@amvetsaux.org

Registration Information

Please make certain to check one (1) under both "organization affiliation" and "registering as".

<u>Organization Affiliation</u>	<u>Check One:</u>	<u>Registering As</u>	<u>Check One:</u>
AMVET		Delegate	
Auxiliary		Alternate	
Junior AMVETS		Department Officer	
Sons of AMVETS		Past Dept. Commander	
		Past Dept. President	
		Guest	

Are you a Department Officer? If so, what is your title? _____

Registration Options

	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Amount Submitted</u>
Package Registration — Received prior to May 1st Includes registration, program book, Joint Luncheon and Commander's Banquet	\$55.00	
Minimum & Guest Registration Includes registration & program book	\$60.00	
Additional Joint Luncheon tickets	\$25.00	
Additional Commander's Banquet ticket	\$35.00	

AMVETS

Department of Illinois Goals:

*To increase public awareness,
to support veteran's issues and
to effect a call to action by all
citizens on behalf of our veterans.*

AMVETS

Department of Illinois Mission Statement:

*To improve the lives
of our nation's Veterans
and the communities they live in.*

Upcoming Meetings

State Meetings

Jun 11 - Jun 14, 2009 Convention

Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Hotel
701 East Adams St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-544-8800

Sept 11 - Sept 13, 2009 School of Instruction

Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Hotel
701 East Adams St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-544-8800

Oct 30 - Nov 1, 2009 SEC

Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Hotel
701 East Adams St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-544-8800

National Meeting

March 12-14, 2009 Spring NEC

Hilton Baltimore
BWI Airport
1739 West Nursery Rd.
Linthicum, MD 21090
800-445-8667
Local: 410-694-0808
\$134.47/Night
Inclusive of Taxes

Aug. 8-15, 2009 65th National Convention

Sheraton
New Orleans Hotel
500 Canal St.
New Orleans, LA 70130
888-627-7033
Local: 504-525-2500
\$126.56/Night
Inclusive of Taxes



Illinois AMVETS & Auxiliary Department Convention 2009



Request for Advertising

Deadline for ad submission: May 15, 2009 by 4:00 P.M.

There will be no exceptions.

Name: _____ Local Post/Aux/Div _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____ Phone #: _____

<u>Choice of Ad</u>	<u>Ad Sizes</u>	<u>Cost</u>
	Business card (no graphics)	\$ 25.00
	1/4 page (4.25 x 5.5)	\$ 50.00
	1/2 page (5.5 x 8.5)	\$ 75.00
	Full page	\$ 100.00

All advertising must be submitted copy-ready. Copy may be emailed and will be included when payment is received. Digital copy is preferred, and can be emailed directly to Ashley.

The Illinois AMVETS Convention will be held June 11 - 14, 2009.

**Location:
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Hotel
701 East Adams St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-544-8800**

Please make checks payable to the Illinois AMVETS Service Foundation.

Please mail ad submissions and this form to:
AMVETS Department of Illinois
c/o Ashley Murphy
2200 So. Sixth St.
Springfield, IL 62703
Or e-mail to: ashley@ilamvets.org.

For any questions, please contact Ashley at 217.528.4713

POST, AUXILIARY & SAD SACKS FORM ONLY. BUSINESSES MUST CONTACT ASHLEY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Scholarship Judging Dates

Division I

March 19, 2009
7:00 PM
Spinal Cord Unit
Hines VA Hospital

Division II

TBA

Division III

March 21, 2009
10:00 AM
Post 169
660 Radio City Dr.
North Pekin, IL 61554

Division IV

March 21, 2009
9:00 AM
Post 3
203 W. Hill St.
Champaign, IL
61820

Division V

March 11, 2009
TBA
Vaughn House
1105 Pearl St.
Metropolis, IL 62960



Veterans Serving Veterans