



**Pottawattamie
County**

Find Your Fire

Veterans Service Office - April 2024

"Your Gateway to Veteran Services"

623 6th Ave, Council Bluffs, IA, 51501

(712) 328-5797

Monday-Friday 8:00 am-4:30 pm



facebook.com/pottcovva

www.pottcounty-ia.gov/departments/veteran_affairs/

Service Connection and You

One of the many services offered at the VSO is assistance with the Veterans Affairs disability compensation process. There is potential compensation for any injury or illness that occurred or was made worse while in service, or that resulted from time in service. The injuries reported can range from a hearing loss to asthma, PTSD, or the total loss of a limb. The first step in the claims process is to receive a current diagnosis at the VA hospital or from a private primary care physician. Once a diagnosis has been received, call our office to make an appointment with our certified officers to begin filing paperwork.



All you will need to bring is a copy of your dd214/discharge paperwork. Judgment on the claim can take at least six months to receive. The timeline depends on current VA scheduling and the size of the claim being processed. Veterans who have filed a claim with the VA will receive notification of the decision before the VSO does. Every county in the state of Iowa has a Veterans Service Officer and there is never a charge for filing.

Further information regarding the claims process can be found at www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/



VSO Services Note

Operation Appreciation -

We are seeking nominations for people in our community that go the extra mile to assist our Veterans. Stop by our office to complete a ballot for the individual you wish to nominate. Ballots can be dropped into the box located in the lobby. If you are unable to come in, call our office and we will complete the ballot for you.

Honor Board -

Donations of pictures from local veterans can be brought into our office and added to the Honor Boards that line the foyer hallway. All items displayed are considered a gift and will not be returned. For more information, visit our website at www.pottcounty-ia.gov/departments/veteran_affairs/

Thank you for your service



Lorena Louise Smith was born in Algona, Iowa in October 1919 and entered the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps on September 10, 1942. Her career included service during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

After working directly under Eisenhower, Smith spent several years training platoons for Company A at the US WAC Center in Fort McClellan, Alabama. She was the first woman promoted to the rank of Master Sergeant, earning that distinction in September of 1952. At her retirement in 1968, she had obtained the rank of First Sergeant. Smith passed away in Council Bluffs in 1995.

Smith's medals, uniform, and other memorabilia from her service are on display in the Pottawattamie county VSO lobby.

Upcoming Events

- April 3- caseworker in Avoca
- April 10- caseworker in Carter Lake
- April 17- caseworker in Avoca
- April 24- caseworker in Carter Lake
- May 1- caseworker in Avoca
- May 8- caseworker in Carter Lake
- May 15- caseworker in Avoca
- May 22- caseworker in Carter Lake
- May 27 - office closed for Memorial Day
- June 5- caseworker in Avoca
- June 12- caseworker in Carter Lake
- June 19- caseworker in Avoca
- June 26- caseworker in Carter Lake

Commissioners and Staff Spotlight - Peggy Becker

Last July, the Veterans Service Office welcomed Peggy Becker as its new Administrator. Prior to joining the VSO on September 25, 2000, she worked for an employment agency in accounts receivable. She has lived in Pottawattamie County for 26 years. Amidst the daily responsibilities of managing her caseload and running the VSO, Peggy's favorite part of the job is when she wins on behalf of a veteran. Her future plans for the VSO building include creating a more welcoming environment for the veterans we serve as well as the employees who work here. Instead of a sterile foyer, she is invested in updating the aesthetics to a more professional atmosphere that showcases Pottawattamie County's rich military history. She strives to ensure that our office is the best option for a veteran and their family to come to for answers and assistance in obtaining their benefits. There are never any charges or fees for this service.



Peggy is the daughter of a World War II Navy veteran and a stay-at-home mother. She has three older sisters and two daughters. Her youngest daughter currently lives in New York City and works for the Bronx Public Defender's office. The eldest passed away in August of 2015. In her spare time, Peggy enjoys crafts such as crocheting, reading books in a wide array of genres, and training her three dogs. Her favorite annual VSO event is the Veterans Day parade as it gets the office out into the community and gives us the opportunity to honor veterans and their service.

Contacts

Federal VA 800-827-1000
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
877-424-3838; www.va.gov/homeless/
Veterans Crisis Line - 988, then press 1

Business Highlight - Best Carpet Cleaning & Restoration

Owned by veteran Jim Huff, services include carpet and upholstery cleaning, fiber protection, tile and stone cleaning, rug cleaning, carpet treatment and stretching, and more.

Call 402-393-6110 or visit
www.bestcarpetrestoration.com/contact/ to schedule
an appointment.



Did you know?

The Pottawattamie County VSO was founded in March of 1888. We were initially known as "The Soldiers' Relief Commission".

Resources

[Employment Assistance](#)- the VA website offers information on job accommodations, apprenticeships, career building, and more at www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/veterans/findajob

Iowa Workforce Development offers veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses several resources during the search for employment. Visit workforce.iowa.gov/jobs/veterans for more information and for other online employment resources.

[VA Community Care Provider Locations](#) - New VA urgent care provider locations have opened in Council Bluffs. To find a location near you, visit www.va.gov/find-locations/

History and Trivia



Word List

Devil Dogs (name given to US Marines during WWI)
 Tun Tavern (location of first Marine Corps recruitment)
 Samuel Nicholas (first commissioned Marine Corps officer)
 Barbary Pirates (first Marine Corps overseas engagement)
 Belleau Wood (victory during WWI)
 Howard P Perry (first African American recruit to join the Marines)
 Parris Island (recruiting depot in South Carolina)
 Chesty (Marine Corps bulldog mascot)

Presidents Own (nickname of the US Marine Band)
 Semper Fidelis (Marine Corps motto)
 Leathernecks (nickname dating back to the 19th century)
 Opha May Johnson (first woman to enlist in the Marine Corps)
 Scarlet (Marine Corps color)
 Gold (Marine Corps color)
 Always Faithful (Marine Corps motto meaning)

U I T K K D N A L S I S I R R A P X P Z L B
 T H D U T U N T A V E R N K C S S O N A Z A
 U M N B Y Q P U I T E F S M W I K Q F R U R
 B S G Y W H E J E P Q Q A X O L O F Y I E B
 L K X Z K R A S W M I B L B F E D X C B M A
 U H J X A E C A V A O Q O O E D N A H W Q R
 F Z F Y E A K O J B T H H B Q I O O E F O Y
 H B U E R G L E J Z B Z C L G F S T S M V P
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 L X B S C F I M U G L C X C Y D H D F Z O E
 A N A N C D Q R H S L O H K N S P F A U L C
 C D L R M F Q N U A E W O S P T O Z L G D Z
 W K S L Q N A X H L B D B M M N Z P R Z V X
 J P R E S I D E N T S O W N K X U W H A Z F
 S D Y R R E P P D R A W O H R A V Q L Z R D

- Colors: scarlet and gold
- Motto: Semper Fidelis (Always Faithful)
- Song : "The Marines' Hymn"
- March: "Always Faithful"
- Mascot: Chesty XVI, a male English Bulldog
- Founded November 10, 1775 as the Continental Marines
- Re-established July 11, 1798
- Headquarters: Arlington, VA
- Falls under the administration of the Dept of the Navy