

## Mobile Services a Success with Rural Veterans



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Parked and humming in Great Bend at this year's Barton County Fair was a large bus like vehicle emblazoned with patriotic decals, including the emblems for all branches of the armed services. The KCVAO mobile office is just one of the tools in the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs Office outreach arsenal. Celebrating its fifth year of service, the Enhanced Mobile Program has travelled more than one hundred-twenty thousand miles, assisting thousands of veterans in applying for state and federal benefits along the way.

"We'll set up anywhere they'll have us," the program director, Eric Rohleder, said. "Since our inception, we have developed strong partnerships with many businesses and agencies in the state, such as Dollar General, Walmart, and Orschelns just to name a few." Rohleder went on to say, "We have been to fairs, festivals, and sporting events from, Elkhart to Atchison, St Francis to Columbus, and hundreds of locations in between." The summer months are traditionally the busiest time of the year for the Enhanced Mobile Program. The Enhanced Mobile Offices visited 10 unique locations for 21 days in July and early August alone. The annual Kansas State Fair, being one of the biggest events for the Enhanced Mobile Offices, set up two locations on the fairgrounds for the entire ten days in Hutchinson.

"We try to go to the veteran's doorstep so there is no need for them to drive two or three hours for assistance or advocacy," Eric said. "We have remote access to the federal VA Veterans Benefit Management System (VBMS) and can often answer a veteran's questions within a matter of minutes. Each van is also equipped with our own claims management system and we can submit claims or healthcare applications on the spot."

Staffed with five Veteran Service Representatives, each with a military background, the mobile offices likes to consider themselves the ideal entry point into support services for veterans. Headquartered out of Hays and Emporia, the enhanced mobile program prides itself on the fact that they meet veterans one on one with empathy and understanding that comes with having also served. All that is needed to start the paper work is a DD 214; KCVAO staff can assist in obtaining this document if needed. While it often takes additional paper work to complete the claim process, our trained and knowledgeable staff are more than willing to assist the veteran in identifying and obtaining needed documentation.

## Kansas Veterans' Home Update



Ft. Riley Mounted Color Guard

The Fort Riley Mounted Color Guard visited the Kansas Veterans' Home on September 9. Those serving in the Color Guard are active soldiers in the US Army serving a two year assignment. The group visited the field just south of Bleckley Hall to perform for residents and guests, then they joined residents in Donlon Hall for lunch.

American Legion National Commander Kevin Collier included a visit to the Kansas Veterans' Home in his tour of the state in September. Commander Collier met with KVH residents and administration during his time at the Home.



American Legion National Commander



John Wayne Impersonator Dr. Gene Howard

Dr. Gene Howard was in Kansas in September and brought his program to the Kansas Veterans' Home. Dr. Howard is a well known John Wayne impersonator, a veteran of the US Air Force, and an ordained Baptist preacher. His program includes poetry, costumes, props, and a short chapel service.

**For Information on Admission and Eligibility for Kansas Veterans' Home and Kansas Soldiers' Home click on link below**

[Admission and Eligibility](#)

**For Information on each home click below**

[Kansas Veterans' Home](#)

[Kansas Soldiers' Home](#)

## Wreaths Across America

KCVAO  
QUARTERLY

FALL 2015

*Remember the fallen;  
Honor those who serve;  
Teach our children the  
value of freedom.*



2015 will mark the twenty-fourth anniversary of holiday wreaths being donated to decorate graves at Arlington National Cemetery. The tenth year of a national campaign-dubbed Wreaths Across America will bring the same remembrance wreaths to hundreds of participating locations.

Seven ceremonial wreaths will be placed to remember those who gave their lives in service for our country. Specially made wreaths for Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and POW/MIA will be placed by representatives from each branch of service during the ceremony.

These specially made wreaths are donated by Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine. Morrill Worcester, President of Worcester Wreath Company, explains his desire to develop the Wreaths Across America project:

*"Our goal is to expand the recognition of those who serve our country, both past, present, and future, as well as their families who deserve our support. Without the sacrifices of our veterans, there would be no opportunity to enjoy the freedoms, the life we live today."*

Wreaths are purchased through generous donations from Veteran Service Organizations, families and community; through Wreaths Across America. The Kansas Veterans' Cemetery Program goal is to have enough wreaths to place a wreath on all of those interred at all four State Veterans Cemeteries. We thank each of you who helped or donated. Wreaths Across America ceremonies will be held at each State Veterans Cemetery on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am.

## VFW Makes Donation to Kansas Soldiers' Home



Left KSH Clinical Director Ron Friess, Volunteer Coordinator Marilyn Roberts, VFW Quartermaster Larry Rowilson, and KSH Superintendent David Smith

VFW Quartermaster Larry Rowilson presented the Fort Dodge Kansas Soldiers' Home a check for \$1,686 Thursday. The funds were raised from entry fees, food sales and T-shirt sales at the Fort Dodge and VFW Swap Meet, Art/Crafts and Motor Show in August. Steve Dalton, a member of the VFW, grilled the pulled pork and hotdogs, which veterans could eat for free.

More than 300 people attended the car show with 57 entries and 16 different classes. "The money raised will go directly to benefiting the residents here," KSH superintendent Dave Smith said. "The money is put in the residents' benefit fund and the residents vote how the money is spent. None of it is used for operational costs. The residents often buy tickets to events or use the money for going to restaurants."

The committee who organized the event included Bob Dome, Larry Rowilson, Tonya Sanchez and Mary Sanko. KSH staff involved in the planning were Josh Bemiss, Noel Vargas, Ron Friess and David Smith. "None of this would have happened without Bob and Larry," Smith said. "We're very appreciative of their work. The car show was a hit, and we plan to have it again next year."

Tucker, Gloria "VFW Donates \$1,600 to Fort Dodge." *Dodge City Daily Globe*. Dodge City Daily Globe, 4 Sept. 2015. Web. 7 Oct. 2015

# Upcoming Events

## Kansas Soldiers' Home

### November

11 - Veterans Day Sunnyside Elementary  
"Bobcat Choir" Performance

### December

5 & 6 - American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop  
15 - Bible Baptist Homeschool Caroling  
21 - Boothill Casino Hero Tree  
22 - KSH Christmas Party

## Kansas Veterans' Home

### November

24 - Annual Staff Potluck  
30 - American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop

### December

5 - Christmas Cantata by Trinity Baptist Choir  
12 - Fort Riley Band (subject to confirmation/weather)  
13 - KVH Christmas Party  
18 - Meet & Greet with Santa 6-8pm

**NuSound Hearing Presents:**  
**TOPEKA VETERANS PARADE**  
**Saturday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**STATE CAPITAL**

**Parade starts at 11am,  
Staging begins at 9am**

Please join us in honoring and celebrating veterans by participating in or attending the 2015 Veteran's Parade. All entries must be patriotically themed and prizes will be given to the top three most creative and patriotic entries. Register in advance at the website below, or at the event.

**militaryveteranproject.org • 785.633.2575**

Topeka Veterans Day Parade Sponsored: <http://www.topekaveteransparade.com/>

## KCVAO Mobile Services

### The KCVAO Mobile Offices are Ready to Assist!

The Kansas Enhanced Veteran Services Program is a proven outreach program that makes applying for federal and state benefits easier for veterans and eligible family members. The staff at Hays and Emporia have partnered with many organizations and businesses in the last four years to assist veterans all over the state. We have provided top-notch veteran advocacy at fairs, parades, sporting events, and other locations throughout the State of Kansas.



The Emporia Mobile Office at the Sprint Campus in Overland Park



Veterans Day Parade in Leavenworth

If you have questions, or if you would like to schedule one of our vans for your event, please call the Program Supervisor, Eric Rohleder, (785) 260-3100 or email [westksvsp@media-net.net](mailto:westksvsp@media-net.net). You can also download the form at the link below and email, fax, or mail it to the address or number listed on the form.

Events are scheduled on a priority first-come, first-serve basis with the many dates scheduled at least 45-60 days in advance. However, the KCVAO will make every effort to participate in your event if the date is available.

[Mobile Services Office Request Form](#)

[Mobile Office Schedule](#)

# Kansas State Veterans' Cemeteries



Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Dodge



Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Fort Riley



Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at WaKeeney



Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at Winfield

Pre-registration form [KCVA 200](#)

## VA Announces \$4 Million in Funding to Help the Homeless

### VA Announces \$4 Million in Funding to Help the Homeless

WASHINGTON—Today, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald announced the award of \$4 million in renewal funding offered through the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program to 21 community agencies that currently provide enhanced services for homeless Veterans with special needs.

“These important grant renewals will allow community agencies to continue to provide critical transitional housing services where they are needed,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “As a key component of the VA’s plan to significantly reduce homelessness among Veterans, the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Special Need grants will provide funding to community agencies that provide services to homeless Veterans.

The program promotes the development and provision of supportive housing and services with the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and income, and obtain greater self-determination. Specifically, GPD Special Need grant funding will assist with additional operational costs that would not otherwise be incurred but for the fact that the recipient is providing transitional housing and services for the GPD “Special Need” populations, including women, chronically mentally ill, frail elderly, terminally ill, and individuals who have the care of minor dependents.

As a result of these and other efforts, Veteran homelessness is down significantly since the launch of the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in 2010. The state of Connecticut and cities of New Orleans, Houston, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City have all recently announced the achievement of significant milestones related to ending Veteran homelessness.

More information about VA’s homeless programs is available at [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless). Community organizations seeking details and/or more information may visit VA’s National Grant and Per Diem Program website [www.va.gov/homeless/GPD.ASP](http://www.va.gov/homeless/GPD.ASP).



### **SPECIAL NOTICE:**

If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help

**RIGHT NOW,**

call this toll-free number  
**1-800-273-8255**, available 24/7,  
and tell them you are a veteran.



## VA Awards \$8 Million in Adaptive Sport Grants to Aid Disabled Veterans

### VA Awards \$8 Million in Adaptive Sport Grants to Aid Disabled Veterans Grants promote rehabilitation, health and wellness and community reintegration

WASHINGTON-Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald today announced the awarding of up to \$8 million in grants to eligible recipients with experience managing large scale adaptive sports programs for disabled Veterans and disabled Service members of the Armed Forces. The grant recipients may use these funds for planning, developing, managing and implementing adaptive sports programs.

The VA is awarding the Grants to national governing bodies, which prepare high-level athletes for Paralympic competition; Veterans service organizations; city and regional municipalities; and other community groups to provide a wide range of adaptive sports opportunities for eligible Veterans and Service members. The Grants will support sports ranging from rowing, cycling and skiing to golf, fly fishing and equestrian sports.

“Adaptive sports help Veterans heal both physically and emotionally,” said Secretary McDonald. “We are proud to partner with organizations nationwide to provide these rehabilitative opportunities for America’s Veterans.”

VA will distribute the grants to 89 national, regional and community programs serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. Approximately 10,000 Veterans and Service members are expected to benefit.

**Information about the awardees and details of the program may be found at [www.va.gov/adaptivesports](http://www.va.gov/adaptivesports).**



Veterans  
Adaptive Sports

**The Mobile Delivery Program Mobile Office Schedule**

| EVENT                                    | DATES  |        | HOURS   |         | LOCATION                 | CITY          |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------------------------|---------------|
|  | FROM   | TO     | FROM    | TO      |                          |               |
| Veteran Appreciation Event (H)           | Nov 6  | Nov 6  | 8 am    | 4 pm    | Kansas Works             | Great Bend    |
| American Legion Revitalization Event (H) | Nov 7  | Nov 7  | 1 pm    | 3 pm    | American Legion Post 45  | Junction City |
| Veterans Day Parade (E)                  | Nov 7  | Nov 7  | 9 am    | 1 pm    | Downtown                 | Topeka        |
| Veterans Day Parade (H)                  | Nov 11 | Nov 11 | 9 am    | 2 pm    | Downtown                 | Leavenworth   |
| Veterans Day Parade (E)                  | Nov 11 | Nov 11 | 9 am    | 4 pm    | Parade Route             | Emporia       |
| Sprint Veterans Day Commemoration (E)    | Nov 12 | Nov 12 | 8 am    | 5 pm    | Sprint Campus            | Overland Park |
| American Legion Revitalization Event (E) | Nov 21 | Nov 21 | 1 pm    | 3 pm    | American Legion Post 400 | Topeka        |
| Gray Area Retiree Presentation           | Nov 21 | Nov 21 | 8:30 am | 3:30 pm | KS NG Museum             | Topeka        |

**For information on VA Education Benefits  
click on the links below**

[VA Education Benefits](#)

[How To Use Your Education Benefits Brochure](#)

**For information on the State Approving Agency Process click  
the link below**

[SAA Approval Process](#)



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