

The Official Newsletter of the Cedar County Veterans Affairs Office

VA EXTENDS “AGENT ORANGE” BENEFITS TO MORE VETERANS

(Courtesy of news release from the Department of Veterans Affairs October 13, 2009.)

WASHINGTON— Relying on an independent study by the Institute of Medicine, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki decided to establish a service connection for Vietnam Veterans with three specific illnesses based on the latest evidence of an association with the herbicides referred to as Agent Orange.

The illnesses affected by the recent decision are B cell leukemias, such as hairy cell leukemia; Parkinson’s disease; and ischemic heart disease.

In practical terms, Veterans who served in Vietnam during the war and who have a “presumed” illness don’t have to prove an association between their illnesses and their military service. This “presumption” simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits.

The Secretary’s decision brings to 15 the number of presumed illnesses recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“We must do better reviews of illnesses that may be connected to service, and we will,” Shinseki added. “Veterans who endure health problems deserve timely decisions based on

solid evidence.”

Other illnesses previously recognized under VA’s “presumption” rule as being caused by exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam War are: Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy, AL Amyloidosis, Chloracne, Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia, Diabetes mellitus (Type 2), Hodgkin’s Disease, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, Porphyria Cutanea Tarda, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers, and some Soft Tissue Sarcomas.

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Special points of interest:

- Monthly Commissioner Meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. in the basement of the Cedar County Courthouse. The meetings will be as follows: January 27, February 24, and March 24.
- **For your convenience, it is best to call 886-2170 before coming to the office to set up an appointment time. Some appointments can take more than an hour and when applying for benefits there are items you will need to bring with you to apply.**

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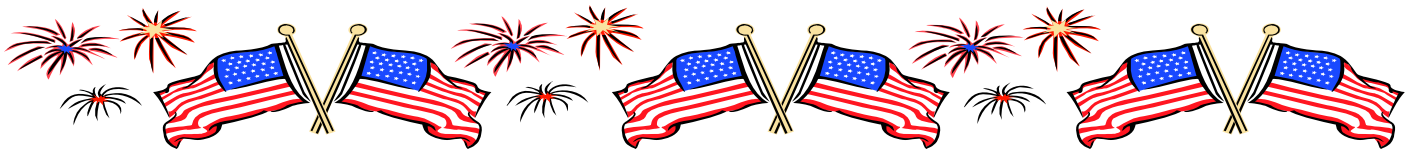
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VETERAN’S DAY ON THE HILL

The Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs invites you to learn about the latest legislative activity in Des Moines. You will be able to hear from key policy makers, visit with event sponsors about veteran related services, and meet with your elected officials and make your voice heard on the key issues affecting Veterans.

If you are interested in attending it is January 21, 2010 at the Capitol in Des Moines. For more information about the event you can contact Cedar County Veterans Affairs at 563-886-2170. The sign in for the event starts at 9:00 a.m. at the Capitol Rotunda - First Floor.





NEW CHANGES TO IOWA VETERANS HOME

The Iowa Veterans Home is in Phase 1 of changes. Funding from the State of Iowa and the Federal Veterans Administration Construction Grant Program was approved in 2008 to begin this phase. Ground breaking began in the Spring of 2009 of the IVH Master Plan incorporating 15-person households where each person has a private bedroom, private bath and shower around a shared central living/dining/kitchen area. Phase 1 includes:

-Construct a 120-bed Pavilion (eight households);and

-Construct a 60-bed Pavilion (four households), with flexibility to accommodate the Person Centered Care environment (environment with a facility design to focus on care resources around the individual resident) for a variety of programs and care levels.

Future Phases of the IVH Master Plan include:

Phase 2 - Construct a second 60-bed Pavilion (four households).

Phase 3 - Remodel Sheeler Building to accommodate administrative and therapeutic functions in a centralized location; relocate the front driveway; and construct a new main entry on the current Loftus Building site.

Phase 4 - Convert Dack Care Facility into the domiciliary, which would allow for the construction of a third 60-bed Pavilion (four households) on the current Heinz Hall site.

Funding for Phases 2, 3, and 4 has been approved by the Iowa Legislature for the State share of the project (\$22.5 million) and awaits bonding certification (Summer 2009). The IVH has made application to the Federal VA Construction Grant Program for the remainder of the funding. The

VA has approved the project concept statement, but the project cannot be considered for federal funding until the State match is in place. The total project cost for all four Phases of the IVH Master Plan totals more than \$108 million.

(Below: Artist's rendition of household interior - dining and kitchen area)



HONORS CORNER

Earl Wells passed away September 21, 2009. He was part of the 12th Engineers Combat Battalion, served in 4 major campaigns to include Normandy, France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He was also awarded 4 bronze stars for the mentioned campaigns.

John Ferguson passed away June 21, 2009. He served in the Navy from 1943-1946 during WWII.

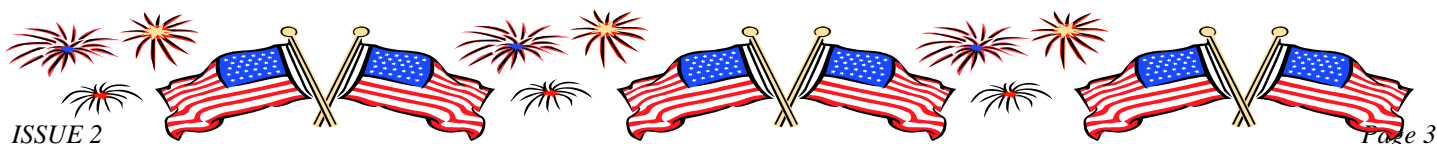
Gaylon Rekemeyer passed away October 7, 2009. He served in the Air Force during the Korean War.

This corner is reserved for recognizing the Cedar County Veterans who have left us. If you have recently lost a loved one who served in the military, please contact the office with their information. We will publish names, branch of service and service times of those who have recently passed.

Please understand that the office does not receive a list of Veterans who have passed. The only names that can be published are those received from family or friends who contact the office with the information.

We will do our best to honor those who served our country honorably and be sure to publish it as such.





IOWA VETERANS HOME SPOTLIGHT

Admissions:

Admission to the Iowa Veterans Home are limited to honorably discharged Veterans eligible for care and treatment at Department of Veterans Affairs facilities. The spouse of a Veteran or widowed spouse of a Veteran shall be eligible for admission, based on the eligibility of the living or deceased Veteran spouse, in accordance with the Iowa Administrative Code. The individual shall have met the residency requirements of the state of Iowa on the date of admission to the Iowa Veterans Home. Spouses must be married to a Veteran for at least one year before the date of application. Certification of residency is required by the County Commission of Veteran Affairs.

Medical Requirements:

Each applicant must have a current physical examination, including laboratory and x-ray findings, completed and verified on the application form by a local physician or a physician from the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

County Commission of Veterans Affairs:

You must have the County Commission certify your eligibility for admission by verifying your residency and military service. An original or certified copy of your Veteran's discharge papers, an original or certified copy of your birth certificate, marriage certificate, death certificate of spouse, divorce decree, durable power of attorney papers, or conservatorship and guardianship papers are needed to complete your application. Copies of all current court orders regarding fi-

nancial obligations, such as child support or alimony must also be provided.

Admission Processing:

The admissions committee shall assign the level and category of care required by the applicant. When a bed is not immediately available in the level and category of care assigned, the applicant's name shall be placed on the appropriate waiting list for that level and category of care or special care unit in the order of the date the application was received.

Financial Information:

The Resident/Patient or applicant, or the legal representative, must disclose to the Iowa Veterans Home all sources of income, such as pensions, social security, private or government annuities, rents, farm income, interest, etc. Assets, such as cash, bank accounts, savings and loan accounts, bonds, real estate and investment, must be listed. The value of the applicant's homestead (as defined in the IAC) must be shown; however, it may not be counted as an asset and may retain its exempt status providing conditions are met as referenced in the Iowa Administrative Code. Failure to make complete and accurate disclosure of income and assets is ground for dismissal from the Home.

Health and Nursing Home Insurance:

All applicants shall inform the Veterans Home of any health or nursing home insurance coverage and shall apply for Medicare if not already covered by that program. The Veterans Home will pay the Medicare premium

upon billing by Social Security Administration. The applicant will be responsible for payment of any other premiums. Any insurance payments shall be applied toward the cost of medical care before the Iowa Veterans Home funds are expended.

Types of Care:

The Iowa Veterans Home has two levels of care. The Resident is evaluated to determine the level of care that best fits his/her needs. These types of care are:

Residential Care (Domiciliary) is the area where the Resident cares for his/her own needs with the exception of meals which are provided in a central dining room. Medical and nursing supervision are available on regular and frequent, but not continuous basis.

Nursing Care (Nursing Home Care) are those areas in which the Resident requires ongoing nursing supervision and/or assistance in one or all areas of physical needs and activities of daily living. Care in this area ranges from total assistance in all care needs to supervision of one or two care needs, depending upon the Resident's capabilities. Medical care is available on a regular and frequent, but not continuous basis.

Costs of Care:

Eligible Veterans, their spouses, and/or widowed spouses are admitted without regard to their financial status. The rate of payment is based on the actual cost of care and the individual's ability to pay using available resources.

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Office**

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Veteran Commissioners

Who are your Cedar County Veteran Commissioners?

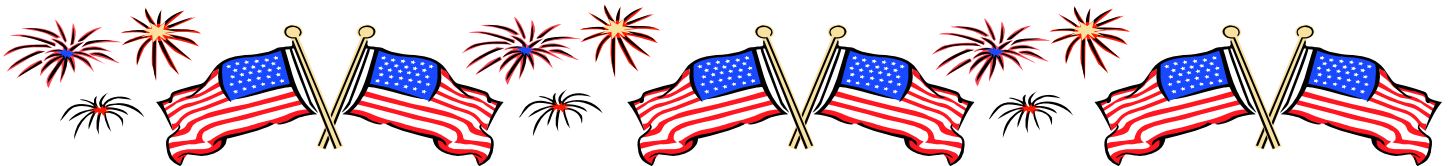
Bruce Jeffries, Chairman

John Sauer

Patrick Ihns

Marlin Hillyer

Virgil Kruckenberg



FOOD CERTIFICATE RESULTS

The food certificate sign up has passed. The Veterans Affairs office received generous monetary donations from the following organizations and private donors:

- *Garey Whalen Legion Post 123, Tipton \$200*
- *Cedar Co. Post 2537, VFW in Tipton \$200*
- *Busch Dennis Post 309, Mechanicsville \$100*

- *Cedar County Hero's Memorial Account in memory of David Behrle \$200*

- *Virgil Kruckenberg \$20*

- *Farm Bureau Women and Men \$50*

This year 14 Veterans, their Widows or their dependents will receive a gift card to be used from a local store. This gift card will be issued later in the Spring to help with food

purchases or household needs after the holidays have passed.

Cedar County Veteran Affairs would like to extend a big thank you to those that donated. Monetary donations are still being accepted for these families until March 31st. We will be distributing the gift cards after that date.