



THE UTAH

A PUBLICATION OF THE UTAH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

VETERANS VOICE

VETERANS.UTAH.GOV • NOVEMBER 2015



Honoring Utah's Veterans

By Governor Gary R. Herbert



Each year on Veterans Day we honor Veterans for the valiant service they have rendered to our great country and our great state. On behalf of a grateful state, I thank the men and women who have worn our country's uniform.

Utah is proud to be home to more than 160,000 Veterans who have served our country at home and across the globe in various wars from World War II to today. We recognize and appreciate all who have worn the military uniform of the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard while serving either on active-duty, in the Reserves, or the National Guard.

I am honored to meet Veterans throughout our state at various events: military ceremonies, on the job, at the VA Medical Center, at universities and colleges, and Utah Honor Flights.

More than 8,000 Veterans are currently studying at colleges and universities across the state.

I am pleased to note that Utah's Veteran unemployment rate is the 11th lowest in the country, and more than 1,400 companies are registered as Utah Patriot Partners.

We are fortunate to have groups that meet regularly to improve and promote Veteran employment, education, and health and mental wellness, as well as Veteran-owned businesses. We also have a Commission on Veterans and Military Affairs that meets monthly, and are also blessed to have an excellent Veterans Affairs Medical Center. These and other programs assist Veterans throughout the state as we continue to improve our services to meet their needs.

HONORED VETERANS, I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SERVICE. You are the ones that preserve our freedoms, our values, and our way of life. You raised your hand, took an oath, and were willing to lay down your life for others. That is indeed something we must recognize and honor each and every day, not only on Veterans Day. 🇺🇸

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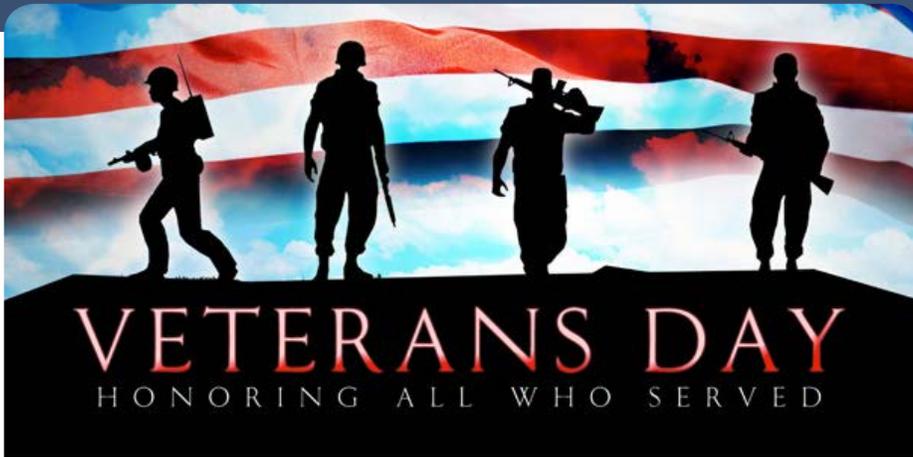
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WORLD WAR II/KOREAN WAR • VIETNAM WAR • COLD WAR/PEACETIME • GULF WAR/OIF/OEF • FAMILY



Veterans Day Events: Wednesday – 11 November



★ **Veterans Day Ceremony**
1400 – 1600 • Capitol Rotunda

★ **Military Appreciation Day**
0900 – 1830 • Hogle Zoo

★ **America's Freedom Festival**
1000 • Timpview High School, Provo

★ **Veterans Day Ceremony**
0845 – 1200 • University of Utah, Union Ballroom

★ **59th Annual Veterans Day Concert**
1900 • Jon M. Huntsman Center, University of Utah

★ **Veterans Day Parade and Program**
1100 • Taylorsville, Valley Regional Park

★ **Salt Lake Community College Veterans Day Flag Raising Ceremonies 0830, 3 locations:**
Taylorsville Redwood Campus – Student Center Flag Pole
South City Campus – Main Flag Pole
Jordan Campus – Main Flag Pole

★ **Weber State Veterans Day Celebration**
0900 • Ballroom in Building D3

★ **William E. Christoffersen Salt Lake Veterans Home Veterans Day Ceremony and Open House • 1000**

★ **Central Utah (Payson) Veterans Home Program**
1030 • Combined with Payson City

★ **American Legion Post 27 & City of Farmington**
1111 • Veterans Memorial at Farmington City Cemetery

★ **Washington County Veterans Day Parade • 1111**

★ **Weber State Veterans Day Event: A Light to Remember**
1630 • Stewart Clock Tower

★ **Tooele Veterans Day Program and Breakfast**
0930 • Breakfast
1100 • Program
Dow James Memorial Park, Tooele

★ **Layton City Veterans Day Program**
1100 • Central Davis Jr. High School Gymnasium

★ **Southern Utah (Ivins) Veterans Home Program • 1330**

★ **Pacific Islander Veterans Day Celebration**
1730 • Ft. Douglas Officer's Club
*Registration required

★ **Riverton Veterans Day Program**
1830 • Sandra N. Lloyd Community Center

★ **West Valley Veterans Day Program**
1730 • Utah Cultural Celebration Center

★ **Northern Utah Veterans Day Memorial Concert**
1900 • Ellen Eccles Theatre

★ **Wild Wednesdays: Special Veterans Day Program**
1545 • Ogden Nature Center

ALL DAY:

★ **Loveland Living Planet Aquarium**
12033 S. Lone Peak Parkway
Free admission for military personnel, Veterans, and their immediate family

★ **Discovery Gateway Children's Museum**
444 West 100 South, Salt Lake City
Active and retired military families with proper ID receive free admission for up to four people

★ **Tracy Aviary**
Liberty Park, Salt Lake City
Veterans, military personnel, and first responders and their families get in for \$1 per person

★ **Natural History Museum of Utah**
301 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City
Free admission for Veterans and one guest on Veterans Day



**National Parks Entrance
November 11, everyone
can get this freebie**

Outreach, Websites, Claims Assistance, Events, and Resources



UTAH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

veterans.utah.gov

Register your information with the Veterans Information System:
uvisreg.utah.gov/vtsreg/public/Register



CLAIMS ASSISTANCE CALENDAR

veterans.utah.gov/outreach-calendar

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

veterans.utah.gov/events-calendar



COORDINATION OF VETERANS SERVICES

veterans.utah.gov/coordination-of-veteran-services

Upcoming Events — veterans.utah.gov/events-calendar

NOVEMBER

Tuesday – 3 November • 1000

Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal Ceremony • State Capitol Rotunda

Tuesday – 3 November for three to six months

POW “Victory from Within” Traveling Exhibit
1200 – 1700 Ft. Douglas Military Museum

Thursday – 5 November • 1100 – 1500

Hero 2 Hired Job Fair
South Towne Exposition Center

Friday – 6 November • 1100

George E. Wahlen Ogden Veterans Home Celebration

Saturday – 7 November • 0930

Run | Walk | Roll 5K Veterans Day Fun
Run • Southern Utah Veterans Home, Ivins

Ogden Veterans Day Parade • 1111
988 Washington Boulevard

Veterans Day Ceremony and Dance • 0730
Ogden Eagles Lodge
*Cost associated

Sunday – 8 November • 1900

Cedar City Veterans Day Concert
Heritage Center Theater

Monday – 9 November • 1100

Brigham City Veterans Observance
Brigham City Senior Center

Tuesday – 10 November • 1600 – 2000

Grit to Glamour ô Women Veterans
Celebration • Zions Bank Founders Room

Wednesday – 11 November

VETERANS DAY EVENTS (See page 2)

Salt Lake County Veterans Day Celebration • 1100

Salt Lake County Government Center

Friday – 13 November • 1200

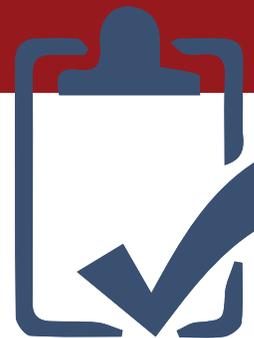
Saluting Our Heroes – sponsored by
National Ability Center • Grand America
Hotel

DECEMBER

Monday – 7 December • 0900

Wreaths Across America Event
State Capitol Rotunda

New State Law Strengthens Veteran Claims Assistance Protections



Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs

A new state law passed in the 2015 General Session, HB205 Veterans' Claim Assistance Disclosures, was written to help promote transparency for Veterans and their family members as to who may assist them when filing or going through the disability or Aid and Attendance claims process. The first piece states that it is illegal to charge anyone a fee for filling out and filing the initial application for VA benefits, no matter who is doing it. However, if after filing a claim and receiving decision you do not believe is fair and you decide to appeal the judgement, you can either represent yourself, have someone represent you at no cost, or hire someone to represent you.

There are ample free services available from state Veteran Service Officers and from Veteran Service Organizations (see Contact Information on the back page) to file claims or prosecute an appeal with the VA. Many Veterans, however, are not aware of or choose not to use these no-cost services, and think they must always pay for them. There are many accredited VA claims representatives and attorneys that legally provide their services both pro bono and for a fee to assist Veterans. Many Veterans and non-Veterans alike hire financial advisors, CPAs, tax preparers, and lawyers to help navigate the administrative, legal, and financial complexities of modern life. The key for Veterans and their families is understating where and how the free services are available and then deciding if they are better off hiring someone instead.

At its essence HB 205 requires claims representatives and attorneys to disclose to Veterans that they are accredited by the VA and that federal law restricts the charging of a fee for assisting in the initial application for VA benefits. The mandated disclosure

form resulting from HB205 also highlights that the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs provides free information and claims preparation assistance and encourages Veterans and their families to call for information first.

Make no mistake — the claims process can be very involved and confusing. Most people providing assistance do so very well and in accordance with regulations; however, some skirt the rules. Previously reported and potential abuses include:

- Unaccredited individuals providing claims assistance
- Claims representatives falsely stating a special “in” with the VA to get faster processing
- Claims representatives falsely stating they achieve better outcomes by virtue of paying for their services
- Inappropriate financial products being sold in conjunction with claims assistance
- Charging a “consulting fee” for financial planning in conjunction with or as a prerequisite for claims assistance

If in doubt, call the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs and we will help you: 801-326-2372.

Note:

Federal Law, Title 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) governs individuals providing VA claims assistance and the representation of VA claimants to ensure those Veterans have responsible and qualified representation in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for Veterans benefits. Any individual providing VA benefits claims assistance must be accredited by the VA, and a searchable list of VA-accredited representatives in the State of Utah, including Veterans Service Organizations, agents, and attorneys, is available at the VA Office of General Counsel website: www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp. 

Oral History Project/ A Farewell Note

American West Center's Saving the Legacy Oral History Project

By Chris Dunsmore



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
American West Center

In 1999 the American West Center created the Saving the Legacy Oral History Project to collect and preserve the personal accounts of Veterans so that scholars and future generations would have access to these accounts and better understand the realities of war.

Veterans who served, or those still serving in the military in any capacity from World War II through the present, are eligible to participate, regardless of branch or rank. Civilians who served in support of a war effort in a professional capacity also are welcome to participate. Our staff interviews Veterans and collects audio-and video recorded first person narratives. Interviews are conducted in quiet, indoor locations such as homes, private offices, or conference rooms. The narratives are transcribed and, after the narrator's final approval, the transcripts are made available in the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections.

As a primary source, researchers, scholars, and educators rely on Saving the Legacy interviews. These oral histories supplement historical texts and are a valued cultural resource. The American West Center would be honored to include your story in the Saving the Legacy Oral History Project. Please contact chris.dunsmore.88@gmail.com or call the American West Center at (801) 581-7611. 🇺🇸

A Farewell Note

By Robert Welsh

It is with more than a little melancholy that I write this brief editorial which, barring any unforeseen circumstances, will be my last as your editor. It was seven years ago that I was designated Editor-in-Chief of the *Utah Veterans Voice*. When I came to work at what was then the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs in 2008, I was unsure as to just exactly what I would be doing. But, Terry Schow, the Department's Executive Director at the time, cleared things up quickly for me. "Mr. Welsh, your resume indicates that you have verifiable writing, editing, and publishing skills. Since Berni Davis [the paper's most competent previous editor] is taking on a new task, the paper is now in your hands. Remember, it is the voice of the Department."

It did not take long for me to embrace the job. I looked forward to the opportunity to express my deep concern for Veterans issues as well as put forth some interesting historical pieces. (A significant number of editors are English, Journalism, or History majors, and yours truly is no exception [History]). And yes, it was filled with history. When I did not have sufficient copy from the Department's various entities to fill the pages, I wrote. And I will always remember Terry Schow's words when the first edition I edited came out: "Four pages on war dogs Mr. Welsh, four pages. Really? Really?"

That was then — this is now. When Terry Schow retired and Gary R. Harter,



Col. USA Ret. took up the reins of the newly-designated Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs on 1 July 2013 changes were effected to the paper. I had pushed for a bi-monthly newsletter format for some time, and Director Harter allowed — nay, mandated — it to happen. The focus changed as well to giving voice to our partnerships in serving the Veteran and Military communities. Thus, I got to write fewer and fewer of my historical pieces, but I still loved my job.

Director Harter's move was the right one to make. We do what we do serving our constituents with the participation of DoD, community and business partners, the Utah National Guard, our congressional delegation, state and municipal governments, and other agencies too many to name. Sometimes we lead, sometimes we support, but we always participate. Community organizations such as the Utah Defense Alliance and the Military Affairs Committees of the Salt Lake and the Davis / Weber Chambers of Commerce provide essential citizen input, collaboration, and support. Acknowledging them is truly a good thing for the paper and its readers.

So, let me close by saying thank you to Terry Schow and Gary Harter especially for allowing me to do the job, all my colleagues in the Department, Pat Swenson, designer extraordinaire, and to you — faithful readers of the *Utah Veterans Voice*. 🇺🇸

Hand in Hand Outdoors Fallen Warriors Memorial Camp

By Capt. Steve Henline, Executive Director / Founder

They came from both Utah and Wyoming — disabled Veterans, community leaders, volunteers, and other supporters of this unique facility being built on the shores of Flaming Gorge Reservoir at Manila, Utah. As the flag of our country, the states of Utah and Wyoming, and those of each military service unfurled above them, Lt. Col. Bruce Brewer, Utah Army National Guard (UTANG) Chaplain, offered a prayer beseeching God to watch over this sacrosanct place and the warriors it would serve.

The camp was conceived by Hand in Hand Outdoors, a Utah-based nonprofit foundation, as a gathering place and a place to heal for the nation's disabled combat Veterans and their families as well as Gold Star families who had lost their fathers and sons on the battlefield. The camp will serve 18 Veterans and family members with stays ranging from one night to a week. Lodging, food, and activities will be provided without cost to the Veterans and their families.

Hand in Hand Outdoors executive director, Steve Henline, addressed the gathering and spoke of the vision for the camp: "Our mission is to provide healing recreational therapy for wounded warriors, disabled Veterans, Gold Star families, and other Veterans and their families who have

suffered greatly for the cause of freedom. This will be a special place unlike anything else in our country. Those we serve and their families will gather here to wash away the nightmares of war that plague many of them, and share the wonders of one of the nation's most beautiful recreational areas"

According to Carrie Robarge, co-founder of the organization: "Our long-term goal is to purchase enough land in the area to build a ranch and have a permanent home for the disabled Veterans to come to, relax, and heal. In the short term we are building this camp using a huge deck that will hold 8 large wall tents equipped with beds, heaters, and everything needed and a 30' yurt that we will use to cook and serve meals"

Brian Lee, project manager during the construction, stated: "A project of this magnitude cannot be built without the efforts of a whole community and this project reaches across two states and numerous individuals and caring organization that have committed their time, energy, and funds to ensure this project reaches fruition"

The camp is expected to be operational late in 2015, and more information on the project can be found at Hand in Hand Outdoors webpage: www.handinhandoutdoors.org or by reaching Steve Henline at steve@handinhandoutdoors.org or 801 592 7809. 🏠



Freedom Eagle Monument

The
Guardian
Has Landed
at the
Southern
Utah
Veterans
Home

By Jacqueline Peterson, State Officer

The Southern Utah Veterans Home at Ivins held a community ceremony for the Freedom Eagle Monument on 29 May 2015. City of Ivins Mayor, Chris Hart, christened the monument “The Guardian” during the unveiling. Created by local artist Edward E. Hlavka, the magnificent bronze Freedom Eagle Monument stands nearly 20 feet high on a sandstone pillar in dedication to our country’s Veterans. The monument soars proudly on its 10 foot wingspan, and weighs approximately 1,350 pounds.

Nearly 500 community members attended this event, and the guest speaker was Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, the Adjutant of the Utah National Guard, and his wife, Charn. Gen. Burton made a touching

speech as The Guardian was officially dedicated. The monument was funded in part through the sale of engraved commemorative bricks purchased in dedication and in recognition of the fallen, in honor of the families who have stood in support of soldiers, sailors, and airmen and in humble appreciation of their dedication to protecting the freedom of Americans. The remaining \$50,000 was given by two most-generous individual donors — David Toth of Ivins and David and Ruth Norman of Northern California. They each pledged \$25,000 each to bring The Guardian to the Southern Utah Veterans Home. The friends both have family histories of military service and have both lost active-duty loved ones. We hope you will visit and see this magnificent piece of art. 🇺🇸



70 Years to the Day Our Namesake Receives His Medal

Two More Employees Add Their Names to a Prestigious List



By Jill Atwood, Chief Communications Officer, VA Salt Lake City HCS

Two nurses were honored with the “Spirit of George E. Wahlen Award” on 5 October for their tireless dedication to Veterans. Congratulations to Rob Phillips, MICU Nurse Manager, and Stephanie Hatton-Ward, Clinical Nurse Coordinator for Medicine and Surgery. Both were nominated by their peers for their stellar work and commitment to our Veterans. The ceremony is always a wonderful reminder of the dedication going on behind the scenes at the medical center that Veterans and the general public don’t often get to hear about. It is

also a great time to reconnect with our extended family, the Wahlen’s.

This year, George’s youngest son, Brock, made brief remarks and for the first time all five of George and Melba Wahlen’s children were present for the ceremony. This year we had the biggest “class” ever with 29 nominees and 2 award winners. Congratulations! 5 October 2015 marked the 5th annual presentation of this award that recognizes one supervisory and one non-supervisory employee each year. Veterans can also nominate staff members and should contact the Public Affairs office for more information. 🏆

Salt Lake City Regional Office Celebrates Going Paperless

By Daniel Prorok, IPC Coach, Salt Lake City VA Regional Office

The Salt Lake City VA Regional Office Veterans Service Center (VSC), Intake Processing Center (IPC), and File Bank recently achieved a major milestone by sending off the last box of Veterans’ C-files to the Scanning Vendor. During her visit to the Regional Office on 26 August 2015 to officiate the Installation Ceremony for new Director, Loren Miller, Under Secretary for Benefits (USB), Allison Hickey, was also able to participate in sending off the last box of files. Ms. Hickey sealed the last box of Veterans’ C-files from the RO’s File Bank, in preparation for shipment to the Scanning Vendor. There are now no C-files remaining in the RO’s File Bank.

On 27 July 2015, the Regional Office started the “Buffer Project,” with the goal to send all remaining C-files at the RO to the Scanning Vendor by 28 August 2015. In less than one month, IPC and File Bank personnel processed and shipped more than 700 boxes of files. These boxes contained more

than 8,000 volumes of Veterans’ C-files. The Team completed the shipment of all but one box by 21 August 2015. This left the one remaining box to be sent on 26 August 2015, as the USB, IPC, and File Bank personnel joined in to celebrate this achievement. The Salt Lake City Regional Office is now paperless, with the VSC a fully paperless operation. 🏆



Volunteer Veteran Transportation Drivers Needed in Rural Utah

By Jill Atwood, Chief Communications Officer, VA Salt Lake City HCS

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System Veterans Transportation Service (VTS), along with the Utah Disabled American Veterans Volunteer Transportation Network (DAV/VTN), partner to provide transportation services to Veterans with special needs and to Veterans who need transportation to and from their outpatient appointments. This is a great opportunity to connect with and serve Veterans!

To qualify:

- Provide proof of valid insurance
- Must have valid driver's license and a clean driving record
- Must pass a VA drivers physical every four years
- Attend orientation and all driver training courses
- Ability to communicate with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds
- Accept, understand, and respect the confidential aspects of the assignment

For more information call 801-582-1565 ext. 1079 or 1027 



The poster features the VA logo and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs text. It includes a photo of a basketball player and a photo of a wheelchair athlete. The main text reads: **36TH NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES**. Below this, it says **GET INVOLVED • VOLUNTEER • DONATE • SUPPORT** and **JUNE 27 - JULY 2, 2016 - SALT LAKE CITY, UT**. A logo in the bottom right corner says **2016 STRIVE LIVE NWG CONQUER** with the tagline **SALT LAKE CITY GAMES ELEVATED**.

For general games information, please contact: **Jacob Bowman - 801.582.1565 ext. 1919**
jacob.bowman@va.gov



www.wheelchairgames.org





Team **RED** WHITE & BLUE Enriching the Lives of America's Veterans

By Chris Francese, Captain, Salt Lake City Chapter

Team Red, White & Blue (RWB) is a national 501(c)3 Veteran Service Organization with the mission of enriching the lives of Veterans by connecting them to their community through physical and social activity. Currently, there are more than 86,000 members in 181 locations around the world. On the local / chapter level, we are a 100% volunteer organization that strives to live and promote the “Eagle Ethos” of Camaraderie, Commitment, Community, Passion, People, and Positivity. There is no cost to join the team and there is no obligation to fundraise. We are an all-inclusive organization that welcomes all Veterans, no matter when or how they served, and all civilians who are interested in truly supporting the Veterans in their community. For Veterans, we foster an environment that allows for a renewed or continued sense of purpose, identity, camaraderie, and of being an integral part of something larger than ourselves, similar to what we had when we served.

Here is some information on how you can get involved in the chapter:

1. You can participate in weekly physical fitness events with the community. We have established a variety of consistent weekly events that will hopefully appeal to you. We have weekly walking, running, rucking, cycling, and Cross-fit activities around the valley.
2. You can get involved by participating in one of our monthly community athletic events. They can include anything from a 5k to a triathlon, yoga to Cross-fit, or any variety of indoor or outdoor

recreational / physical events. Remember ... *We don't just run!*

3. You can attend our monthly chapter social events that bring the community together so everyone can meet one another in a non-fitness environment.
4. You can participate in many volunteer opportunities throughout the year that benefit other charities and non-profits. This can include working at a water station at a local race, helping out at a homeless Veterans shelter, rebuilding a Veteran's roof with Habitat for Humanity, running an event at the Special Olympics or playing bingo at a Veterans Home.

Our events provide opportunities for veterans and community members to interact with one another in a positive way. 🇺🇸

TO JOIN US, visit www.teamrwb.org and follow the “Join the Team” link at the top of the page. You will find information about the organization and national-level events. The best way to follow local events in the Salt Lake City area is to “like” our Facebook group and follow our posts and events.

[Facebook.com/groups/TeamRWBSaltLakeCity/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/TeamRWBSaltLakeCity/)



SIXTY YEARS Honoring VETERANS

For the past 60 years, Veterans of all branches of service along with family members and friends have enjoyed music hosted by the Utah National Guard's 23rd Army Band honoring Veterans.

By Captain Ryan Sutherland, Public Affairs Specialist, Utah National Guard

There is much to be said about honoring America's Veterans on Veterans Day. Year after year, remembrances of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice can be seen in the commemorative flags, the planned processions, and speaking engagements held nationwide in honor of the noblest of our generations.

But, we are also reminded that many of the associations of this day are not just solemn, but are joyful. For the past 60 years, Veterans of all branches of service and spanning from World War II to the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, family members, and friends alike, have joined together for a night of music hosted by the Utah National Guard's 23rd Army Band. And, we are reminded that we are here not only to honor those who have laid down their lives for our nation, but to celebrate the lives of those very Veterans who stand amongst us on that day.

Each year the 23rd Army Band, led by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Denny Saunders, and a 700-voice Granite School District high school combined choir, presents a patriotic program honoring the valor and patriotism

THE UTAH NATIONAL GUARD PRESENTS:
60TH ANNUAL VETERANS DAY CONCERT

SIXTY YEARS HONORING VETERANS



FEATURING:

UTAH NATIONAL GUARD 23RD ARMY BAND
GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL CHOIRS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2015 / 7:00 P.M.

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

JON M. HUNTSMAN CENTER

Honorary Colonels
Corps of Utah

ZIONS BANK.

AMERICA FIRST
CREDIT UNION

DAYNESMUSIC

MacCool's Restaurant

Utah
PTA
empowering women

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF UTAH

Charitable
Trust

L3

of Veterans who risked their lives — and in many cases, gave their lives — defending liberty. The show pays tribute to their sacrifices, as well as those of their families and loved ones.

In celebration of its 60th annual Veterans Day concert to be held 11 November at the University of Utah's Jon M. Huntsman Center, the Utah National Guard will pay tribute to the people behind the performance, recognizing the profound impact their musical performances have made on Veterans for the past 60 years.

Throughout its history, the Veterans Day Concert, being a free event to the public, hasn't received much publicity outside of word of mouth. Yet year after year, the audience continued to grow so profusely in numbers that the only venue large enough to hold it in was the Jon M. Huntsman Center. It's now one of the largest Veterans Day concerts put on by a military band in the country. 🇺🇸

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I Be Buried in the Utah Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park?

The Utah State Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park follows the eligibility requirements of the VA National Cemetery System. Any U.S. Armed Forces active personnel who die while performing duty or after having served during wartime are eligible for burial. Reservist and National Guard retired personnel with 20 years of service are also eligible, as are surviving spouses and dependent children (under rules established by the State of Utah; Utah Code 71-7-3). Contact: Utah Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park 17111 South Camp Williams Road, Bluffdale, Utah 84065 Phone: (801) 254-9036.

What Are Burial Benefits?

Effective 7 July 2014 the VA changed its monetary burial benefits regulations to simplify the program and pay eligible survivors more quickly and efficiently. These regulations authorize the VA to pay, without a written application, most eligible surviving spouses basic monetary burial benefits at the maximum amount authorized in law through automated systems rather than reimbursing them for actual costs incurred.

The new burial regulations permit the VA to pay a flat rate for burial and plot or interment allowances thereby enabling the VA to automate payment of burial benefits to most eligible surviving spouses and more efficiently process other burial benefit claims. The burial allowance for a non-service-connected death is \$300, and \$2,000 for a death connected to military service.

An “accrued benefit” is not considered a death benefit, but a benefit owed to the Veteran for a period prior to

his or her death. Generally, accrued benefits are payable to the surviving spouse, and, if there is none, then to the surviving children in equal shares. Like in the case of death benefits, survivors become the claimants in these VA proceedings.

A survivor of a deceased Veteran is qualified for accrued benefits only if the entitlement derives from an existing rating or other VA decision or from a pending claim filed by the deceased Veteran. One important requirement of an accrued benefits claim is that it must be filed within one year of the death of the Veteran.

Another important limitation of accrued benefits claims are that they are decided only on the evidence existing at the time of the Veteran’s death. A claimant may not submit additional evidence, such as private medical reports, to establish entitlement to benefits. The only post-death evidence which can be considered is the death certificate.



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HAVE SERVED AMERICA**



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Permit # 4621

WORLD WAR II/KOREAN WAR • VIETNAM WAR • COLD WAR/PEACETIME • GULF WAR/OIF/OEF • FAMILY



CONTACT INFORMATION

Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 326-2372
<http://veterans.utah.gov>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Regional Benefits Office
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
1 (800) 827-1000

VA Salt Lake City Health Care System
George E. Wahlen Veterans Affairs Medical Center
500 Foothill Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 582-1565
<http://www.saltlakecity.va.gov>

American Legion Service Office
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 326-2380

Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 326-2375

Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 326-2471

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, Utah 84113
(801) 326-2385

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
12953 South Minuteman Drive
Draper, Utah 84020
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