

THANK YOU, HEROES!



I would personally like to express my gratitude to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to our country to protect our freedoms.

I believe our commitment to those who courageously serve our nation extends beyond their time in the military. This belief motivates me to push for policies in our state that give veterans the opportunities and care they have earned, and to support initiatives with the goal of reducing the rate of veteran homelessness and suicide in our state and country.

I have worked to make sure that passing bills for veterans and servicepeople does not become a partisan issue. It is an honor to work with my colleagues in the legislature to find common ground in this belief. **We are extremely proud of the servicepeople and veterans who call Wisconsin home.**

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Milwaukee Soldiers Home Grand Reopening



Photo Credit: Ebony Cox/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

I am very pleased to report that tremendous progress has been made towards the restoration of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home and a grand opening and dedication ceremony was held last week for the six buildings that were under rehabilitation on their campus, including: Old Main; the Administration Building; the Catholic Chaplain's Quarters; and three duplexes.

These buildings have been renovated to include 101 units of housing with supportive services for veterans who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and their families. The Old Main building also has a museum that describes the history of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home Campus.

[Read more.](#)

[More pictures.](#)

Missing Korean War Soldier Identified

Recently, the remains of Army Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas J. Valentine were identified by the [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency](#) among remains collected for scientific analysis and possible identification from North Korea.

He was assigned to Battery B, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division and was reported Missing in Action on December 6, 1950.

On Tuesday, May 25th, Army Sgt. 1st Class Valentine was buried with full military honors at St. Charles Catholic Cemetery in Cassville, Wisconsin. [Read more.](#)

Wisconsin Veterans Homes reopen to family and friends

Last week the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs announced that the Veterans Homes at King and Union Grove all for in-room visits for members and families, and that the Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls began in-room visits the previous week.

This happy occasion is possible because of the prioritization of the health and safety of residents in our Veterans Homes which has brought the positivity rate in these homes down to zero. To ensure that these homes stay open to visitors they will need to maintain a low positivity rate and a high vaccination rate.

[Read more.](#)

Wisconsin National Guard has administered nearly 100,000 COVID vaccines

Mobile Wisconsin National Guard vaccination teams have responded to requests for assistance in communities throughout the state. Their efforts assisting local health departments have enabled the administration of almost 100,000 COVID-19 vaccines since the first teams mobilized in late January.

National Guard members assist clinics by managing immunization data, administering vaccines, monitoring for adverse reactions, supporting logistics, shipping vaccines, and anywhere else that they can.

“We are directly supporting the health and well-being of our local communities, the ones we live or grew up in, with personnel and resources through a global pandemic

affecting the lives of everyone we know and love,” said Capt. Amanda Dickenson, the Wisconsin National Guard's officer-in-charge for the vaccine and specimen collection action team.

[Read more.](#)

Origins of Memorial Day

There are many organizations and events that claim to have provided the origin of Memorial Day. The practice of decorating the graves of soldiers is an ancient custom that people all over the world use to honor the fallen.

During and following the Civil War, “Decoration Day” became an observance in several locations throughout the nation independently. In 1868, General John A. Logan, the commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued a proclamation calling for “Decoration Day” to be observed annually throughout the country, and the new tradition spread quickly.

[Read more.](#)

Some of the legislation I'm supporting this session:

I firmly believe that we cannot turn our backs on our veterans after all the sacrifices they and their families have endured, which is why I work each session to support and help build consensus for policies that will benefit our state's veterans or their surviving spouses, as well as those who are currently serving. The following are some of the policies that I am supporting this session:

[Senate Bill 23/Assembly Bill 48](#): which expands veterans benefits to individuals who served in Laos in support of the US during the Vietnam War.

[Senate Bill 43/Assembly Bill 39](#): exempting military income received while on active duty from state income taxes. ***(Received full support in committee)***

[Senate Bill 104/Assembly Bill 105](#): simplifying the calculation of housing costs in determining gross income for purposes of child support. ***(Passed the Senate unanimously)***

[Senate Bill 173/Assembly Bill 157](#): increasing the grants to counties for veterans services through the VSO.

[Senate Bill 186/Assembly Bill 154](#): recognizing Hmong-Lao Veterans Day on May 14th. ***(Signed into law by Governor Evers)***

[Senate Bill 226/Assembly Bill 203](#): allows members of the national guard and military reserve units to utilize the Veteran indicator on their driver's license.

[Senate Bill 243/Assembly Bill 245](#): reduces the disability rating required to claim the veterans and surviving spouses property tax credit.

I hope that your Memorial Day was filled with fond memories of friends and family who have bravely served our country, and spent celebrating those veterans in our lives and those who are currently serving in the armed forces. Once again, thank you for the sacrifices that you and your families have made in service to our state and country!

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