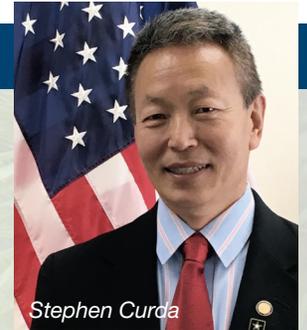




# Illinois Veteran News

An Update from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs ★ December 2018

## ★ From the Director



Stephen Curda

In the spirit of the holidays, I encourage all Illinoisans to remember our veterans and Active duty members this year. None have given more than our men and women in uniform and many continue to give lives of service long after they hang up their uniforms. We are grateful for the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guard and Marines deployed around the world and for their mission of protecting our freedoms.

Earlier this month, we were humbled to award the title of Illinois Bicentennial Honor 200 to two hundred of our fine Illinois Veterans. It was a fine night of celebration for all who could attend. I congratulate all again for being nominated and selected for a title that not many will be able to list as one of their accomplishments.

We also were honored to host a Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day ceremony at the Springfield Elks Lodge #158 in Springfield. The ceremony honored all Pearl Harbor survivors and paid tribute to the more than 2,400 Americans who lost their lives. We honored the brave men and women who gave their all during the attack in Pearl Harbor. The service members who fought relentlessly on December 7, 1941 are true heroes.

We also asked for your support of the First Lady, Diana Rauner to assist with her Holiday Hero Drive of collecting holiday cards and black/brown socks for our active duty military and veterans in our Veterans homes. Thousands of cards were delivered to us, which we passed on the USO and to the residents of our homes. Thank you for supporting this cause that will be a small token to our brave men and women serving our country.

On behalf of our 1300 IDVA employees, we wish you the very best this holiday season. And may you enjoy a peaceful and joy filled holiday.

**May God Bless you and your family!**

**Stephen Curda, Ph. D**

*Brigadier General U.S. Army (ret.)*

*Director, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs*

Our mission at the IDVA is very simple. To serve those who have served. In doing so, we serve not only the men and women who have worn the uniform, but also their families. It is our privilege to be able to help our veterans receive the benefits they have earned through service to our nation. Our goal is to empower our veterans and their families to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

We know there are many veterans within our great state who do not require any assistance – but we still want to encourage you to “Stand Up and Be Counted!” by registering with your local VSO. In doing so, you’re helping IDVA to do a better job of planning for services, seeking federal funding and understanding the needs of our veteran communities statewide. [Click here to register.](#)

**We Thank you for your service and for your sacrifice and we at the IDVA look forward to offering our services to You.**

# ★ Illinois Bicentennial Honor 200



Two hundred years ago, on December 3rd Illinois became the Union's 21st state, and Illinois celebrities, dignitaries, veterans and citizens came together to celebrate at the Bicentennial Birthday Party on Chicago's Navy Pier.

Legendary journalist Bill Kurtis hosted the program, which opened with Wayne Messmer belting out the national anthem and Governor Bruce Rauner welcoming a crowd of more than 2,300 party-goers.

In Act 2, members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra paid tribute to the Bicentennial Honor 200 Veterans with a piece composed by John Williams from the movie "Lincoln." After a video on Illinois military history narrated by Illinoisan Joe Mantegna, Major General Richard Hayes, head of the Illinois National Guard, recognized Honor 200 veterans from over 50 counties. The members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra added to the emotion of the segment by performing the Armed Forces Medley.

You can see the video shown that night by clicking on this link- <https://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/Illinois-Bicentennial-Honor-200-Veterans.aspx>

## ★ Remembering Pearl Harbor

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs hosted a Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day ceremony at the Springfield Elks Lodge #158 (Lake Springfield), in Springfield on December 7th. The ceremony honored all Pearl Harbor survivors and paid tribute to the more than 2,400 Americans who lost their lives. Governor Rauner proclaimed December 7, 2018, as Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day in Illinois. Bobby J. Edwards offered special remarks at the solemn ceremony. The Ceremony included a special wreath laying in the waters of Lake Springfield by the Interveteran Burial Detail Honor Guard while Taps was being played by Mark Thomas. Lunch for all was provided by the WWII Illinois Veterans Memorial committee.



## ★ New Employees



### **Danielle N. Luevano**

Danielle began her employment with IDVA on November 14, 2018. She is the front desk receptionist at the Central Office. Danielle is an 8-year United States Marine Corps

Veteran and served in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While in the Marine Corps, she worked in various supply management roles. Danielle is currently enrolled full time at Park University pursuing her bachelor's degree in Business Management. In her free time, Danielle enjoys playing mother's volleyball, going to the gym, and spending plenty of time with her energetic 5-year-old daughter.



### **Bill Hunt**

Bill Hunt joined IDVA as the Reproduction Service Supervisor I this month. He has worked for the State of Illinois Legislative Printing Unit and most recently the

Department of Children and Family Services.

When Bill is not working he enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his family.

## ★ News from home

### Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy

The Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy Master Plan has been completed and will be on display December 18th in Lippincott Hall on the Veterans Home Campus. "With input from industry experts, as well as from community members across the state of Illinois, the new Master Plan will position the Quincy, IL home as a destination for high-quality, state-of-the-art veteran care," said IDVA Director Stephen Curda, Ph.D.

The Master Plan, a document based on the analysis and evaluation of the campus' current state, will serve as the framework for the future of the veterans' home campus and community. The public is encouraged to stop by any time between 4 PM and 7 PM. The event will be an open-house in which attendees have an opportunity to review exhibit boards, learn about the final Plan recommendations, and speak directly with the project team.



### PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, December 18, 2018  
4 PM - 7 PM  
Lippincott Hall  
Illinois Veterans' Home  
1707 N. 12th Street, Quincy, IL 62301



### Illinois Veteran Home - Manteno

Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs Director Steve Curda, was the guest of honor at the Manteno Veterans Home Marine Corps Birthday Celebration on Sunday, November 18th. Director Curda and Marine Corps League Members of the Kankakee Marine Corps League Detachment 1253 and one of our Marine Lady Veteran Josephine Bogdanich enjoyed a catered luncheon and 50's- 60's musical entertainment. The evening's entertainment took our members down memory lane comparing them to "Andrew Sisters"

## ★ Assisting a Veteran in need

Diane Richardson, A Marine Veteran, was recently transferred from Johnston City, TN to the Illinois Veterans Home in Manteno. But her electric wheel chair could not make the trip. After many phone calls and e-mails with the Marine Corps League and Auxiliary, final transportation of Diane Richardson's motorized wheelchair was arranged from James H. Quillen VA Medical Center, Johnson City, TN to IVHM. The Marine Corps League Auxiliary-Department of Illinois and the Kankakee Unit 1253 put the request out for help to get the chair to Manteno. Randy Rogers from Rossville, GA answered the call and brought the chair up from TN. He refused all financial donations, stating he was just happy to help!



*(left) Margaret Myers – Marine Corps League Auxiliary, Randy Rogers from Rossville, GA, who volunteered to personally transport the wheelchair, and Sharon Beegle, IVHM Social Worker with the new wheelchair. Thanks to Sharon, Mr. Rogers and Margaret, who all worked together to make this happen!*

*(right) Diane Richardson – IVHM member*



## ★ Delivering Holiday Cheer in LaSalle

The local Girl Scout troop decorated small Christmas trees and gave them to some of the LaSalle Veteran home residents. Santa Claus also made a visit to all the residents!



## ★ Robo Calls

Each year, the FCC receives more than 200,000 complaints about unwanted calls. While this may seem like a big number, it pales in comparison to the millions of robocalls being made each day. The calls interrupt dinners and family time; they flood landline and mobile phones. Scam calls frequently solicit money for fake charities, including ones claiming to support America's veterans - some even claiming to be representatives of Veterans Affairs.

We know that scam activity increases during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, so the FCC and VA urge you to be vigilant. We offer the following tips to help you avoid unwanted calls and scams.

- Don't answer calls from unknown numbers. Scammers may spoof their caller ID to display a fake number that appears to be local. If you answer such a call, hang up immediately.

- Never give out personal information such as account numbers, Social Security numbers, mother's maiden names, or passwords in response to unexpected or suspicious calls.
- Be sure to set a password for all voice mail accounts to avoid being hacked.
- Register your number on the Do Not Call List to block calls from legitimate telemarketers at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov).
- Ask your phone company about call-blocking tools and services for your landline phone, and check for helpful apps that you can download to your mobile phone.

Please help spread the word about robocall fraud among those who may need assistance, particularly those who are frequently targeted by phone scams.

For more information, visit: [www.fcc.gov/robocalls](http://www.fcc.gov/robocalls).

## ★ Retirement



*Anthony Vaughn presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to VSO Ted Bieber*

### Certificate of Appreciation to VSO Ted Bieber

A longtime veteran service worker and former Marine who served in the Vietnam War retired from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. Ted Bieber of Lake in the Hills has spent the past 22 years working for the IDVA. His duty was to assist veterans get their benefits in place after their exit from active service.

Bieber also was active in the local veteran community and started a Lake in the Hills support group for veterans who deal with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

**We wish you the best Ted!**



### Phil Slater

Operations & Program Division Manager Mark Patterson presents a certificate of Appreciation to Phil Slater, Supply and Services Manager for IDVA. Phil managed the IDVA print shop for

many years and kept all of our materials current and in stock. Phil was presented with a certificate and an Illinois flag that had been flown over the capitol.

**We wish Phil and his family the very best!**

## ★ Gold Star Family Tree



On December 3rd, Governor Rauner, along with IDVA Director Stephen Curda participated in the lighting of the Gold Star Family Tree in the James Thompson Center in Chicago. Gold Star Family members were present and placed an ornament in memory of their loved one who offered the ultimate sacrifice for their country. IDVA Director Curda said, "When you pause, and reflect on what this Gold Star Christmas Tree means, remember the sacrifice made by the Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Coast Guard and Marine, and the void left in the lives of their Families and friends. Remember their loss was payment on the freedom and liberties so many enjoy and often take for granted."



## ★ Devil Dogs deliver Fruit for Christmas Baskets

Thanks to the Devil Dogs #1000 from Peoria we have all the fruit needed for the LaSalle Home Annual Fruit Basket Christmas Gift.

**Thank you for this wonderful donation.**



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