

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE DEPARTMENT

I MISSION STATEMENT AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Veterans Service Department's mission statement is:

The Sheboygan County Veterans Service Department will provide timely and quality service for veterans seeking assistance with local, state, and federal benefit programs. We advocate for and support the military veterans and their families in our county.

"Serving Those Who Served"

The Veterans Service Department exists under Chapter 45, Wisconsin Statutes, which mandates that each county in Wisconsin shall elect/appoint an honorably discharged veteran of the U S military service to the position of County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO). These duties include:

Advise persons living in the service officer's county who served in the U S armed forces regarding local, state, and federal benefits to which they may be entitled.

Assist in resolving any problems veterans encounter accessing the programs provided by the federal or state Veteran's Administration.

Provide service and assistance to qualified dependents and/or surviving spouse to ensure they are informed of benefits they may be entitled to.

Maintain a record of burials of all veterans within the county.

Cooperate with other local, state, and federal agencies to provide services to veterans and answer questions regarding veteran's issues.

Serve as executive secretary of the County Veterans Service Commission (CVSC). The CVSC is comprised of three honorably discharged veterans who monitor a program to provide financial aid to needy veterans and their dependents.

II GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED IN 2010

CVSO Certification as a Qualified Claims Representative

I am about half done with all the training I need to accomplish for certification. I attended the National Association of County Veterans Service Officer training at the 2010 Annual Conference and received my NACVSO Certification. I completed the online Veterans Service Advisor training needed for the TRIP (Training, Responsibility, Involvement & Preparation of claims) that I need for federal VA access. Once that is completed I can apply for certification from the AL (American Legion), AmVets (American Veterans), DAV (Disabled American Veterans), MOPH (Military Order of the Purple Hearts), TREA (The Retired Enlisted Association), VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars), and VVA (Vietnam Veterans of America).

Expand Outreach and Partnering with Agencies and Organizations

I have made contact with several of the Nursing Home/Assisted Living Facilities in the local area to talk about Veterans issues and provide information on benefits available to their Veteran residents. We have established contact with the Veterans education coordinators at our local institutions of learning to share information on helping Veterans access the new GI Bill the federal government instituted in August.

Initiate Programs to increase Public Awareness

We held the 2010 Sheboygan County Armed Forces Day celebration at the Memorial on Kohler Memorial drive. Our intent was to heighten visibility along with honoring our currently serving Veterans and educate the citizenry of their presence in our communities. We participated with our local Veterans Service Organizations in LZ Lambeau (a welcome home for Vietnam Veterans) and the Veterans Supermarket of Benefits. We supported the County Veterans Service Organizations in the programs and ceremonies they conducted throughout the year.

Organize the office to maximize our resources

The Veterans Service office is an extremely busy place. We were able to procure the services of a Senior Aid worker in 2010 and that has helped us to relieve the backlog of data entry, filing, and routine correspondence. We developed a database to facilitate determining the location/status of a particular file. We also developed forms and procedures to track and standardize the services provided to our Veterans. We conduct staff meetings/training to update ourselves with the changes to the federal and state benefits.

III BUDGET

The Veterans Service Department operated within its \$142,476 tax levy budget for 2010. The overall positive variance was \$3,912. Savings were achieved in the areas of personnel-related expense (primarily due to limiting overtime/comp time), and changes in surcharges for other operating expenses.

The 2011 department tax levy budget is \$143,011; an increase of <1% from the 2010 budget.

IV ISSUES, CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

The Veterans Service Department continues to face many challenges in the year ahead. In 2010, Sheboygan County had 372 clients file claims for federal benefits and 231 for state benefits. We lost our World War II, Korean, and even some of our Vietnam Veterans (218 in 2010) and that impacts the workload in our office to ensure they are honored at their passing and that their dependents receive all their entitlements.

We estimate that each case (federal, state, death) requires about 3 hours of work on our part. That equates to 2463 hours, just for those claims. That leaves approximately 12 hours per week each to accomplish all the other tasks in our office (phone calls, walk-ins, general correspondence, meetings, etc.) Still, we assisted county Veterans in receiving \$19,891,000 in federal benefits, \$115,307 in state benefits; for a total of over \$20,000,000 in spending power for those county residents.

V GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2011

Our goals and objectives include:

1. CVSO to continue with certification training to be a Qualified Claims Representative.
2. Continue to work on outreach and public awareness in the support of veterans programs.
3. Conduct training in the office to keep current on the changes to/new federal and state programs.
4. Pursue avenues to creatively maximize our resources in helping our Veterans community.

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SHEBOYGAN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

I MISSION STATEMENT AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The County Veterans Service Commission (CVSC) exists under Chapter 45 (45.81) of the Wisconsin statutes which mandates that each county in Wisconsin have in place a three member CVSC to provide financial aid to needy veterans, their survivors and dependents. The Commission consists of three honorably discharged veterans who are (appointed) to serve staggered three year terms. From among them they annually elect a Chairperson and Secretary.

CVSC Members

Fred H Henckel, Chairman
Konrad K Kaczkowski, Secretary
David C Williams, Member

II GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED IN 2010

The following is a composite of the activities of the Commission for 2010.

Cases Accepted	118
New Clients	12
Rejected Applicants	3

III BUDGET

We were almost able to make it through 2010 on our projected budget. We exceeded the budget by only \$343. The CVSC gave out \$50,946 in assistance to needy veterans. Through donations from our Veteran Service Organizations (AL 83 & 243, DAV 15, VFW 9156, VVA 618), the Sheboygan Fireman's Union and DuFour Advertising we distributed an additional \$2800 in "Christmas cheer" to needy Veterans and their families.

The 2011 CVSC general operating budget is \$60,840.00; \$2,500.00 more than last year.

IV ISSUES, CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

The state of our current economy is sure to create additional demands on our commission and we are already addressing the potential and looking for creative ways to help those in need while staying within our budget.

V GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2011

1. Develop written instructions for processing a voucher from client application to check issuance.
2. Provide cross training to have an alternate for processing Veteran applications.
3. Reorganize the files to facilitate claims processing.

**SHEBOYGAN COUNTY
VETERAN'S OFFICE**

