

## VSO designed for benefit of veterans & community

Veteran service organizations (VSOs) are designed for the benefit of the veteran and community. Most areas of the country have a local American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, or Veterans of Foreign Wars post/chapter. There are many more service organizations, such as the Marine Corps League, Viet Nam Veterans of America, Non-Commissioned Officers Association, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Fleet Reserve Association and others geared to particular groups of veterans. Each organization has its own individual requirements for membership, of which some are more stringent than others. The requirements range from honorable service during any time period to service in a combat zone to requiring a service-connected disability. These VSOs welcome any eligible member, regardless of age, race, religion or gender. Many of these organizations host auxiliaries so that spouses and other family members can also participate. These organizations provide countless hours of local community service. You'll see veterans proudly marching with our nation's flag at the forefront of parades or donating time and money to local causes. The firing squad and the person who presents the flag at a military funeral are members of veteran service organizations. Sometimes it's as simple as going to the VA hospital to play cards or bingo with the patients. Although they are all separate organizations, there is commonality in their goals:

They are a voice for returning and currently deployed service members and their families; They monitor and lobby for legislation that directly impacts our veteran community;

They help to develop the next generation of patriots through character-enhancing programs. VSOs sponsor Boy Scout troops, Badger Boy's State, Legion Baseball, scholarships and the annual oratorical contests.

Virtually all of our veteran's legislation has been driven by these VSOs or the combined efforts of 36 of them through the military coalition (TMC). The United States wouldn't have the GI Bill if not for them. Each of these groups has service officers who assist and advocate for veterans in filing claims for service-connected disabilities and negotiating the ways of the Veterans Administration. VSOs are responsible for getting

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**April 1, 2010** • All Fools Day

**April 1, 1954** • President Dwight D. Eisenhower authorizes the creation of the U.S. Air Force.

**April 2, 1972** • Vietnam: The Easter Offensive begins - North Vietnam soldiers of the 304th Division take the northern half of Quang Tri Province.

**April 5, 1968** • Vietnam: Operation Pegasus was launched by the 1st Air Cavalry Division to relieve the Marines at Khe Sanh.

**April 6, 2010** • VVA-391 Board of Directors meeting, Veterans Memorial Hall, 7 p.m.

**April 9, 2003** • Invasion of Iraq: Baghdad falls to American forces.

**April 10, 1972** • Vietnam: For the first time since November 1967, American B-52 bombers reportedly begin bombing North Vietnam.

**April 12, 1966** • Vietnam: 1st B-52 bombing of North Vietnam.

**April 13, 2010** • VVA-391 Pot Luck and General Meeting at Sonora Veterans Memorial Hall, A-G bring a dessert, H-M bring a salad, N-Z bring a main dish. Bring enough for 6-8 people. Bring a prospective member to dinner. Sponsors of the Parade will be invited at 6 p.m. and will be presented with Certificates of Appreciation and their banners. Meeting at 7 p.m. Elections will be held at this General Meeting.



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