

FY11 REPORT FOR VETERANS SERVICES

In FY11, The Veterans Services Department assisted 194 cases, including financial and medical assistance. The total amount expended was \$110,223.11. We can expect 75% of this money to be reimbursed next year by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This year \$89,886.71 was reimbursed for last years services to veterans and their dependents under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 115, as amended. The amount received from Federal VA expenditures through pensions and compensations was \$1,385,136.00.

We lost 20 veterans this past fiscal year. All were buried with Military Honors and with a representative from the Veterans Services Office and the Veterans of Martha's Vineyard present. All veteran's graves were decorated with flags per MGL 108 CMR 13:03. Thank you to all town's Grave Officer's for their assistance.

Veterans participated in 4 parades this past fiscal year: Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Holy Ghost Society Parade and Veterans Day. Our guest speaker for Memorial Day this year was Lt. James Craig, U.S. N.R., Operation Desert Storm veteran and American Legion Post 257 member. Lt. Craig flew the H-3 Sea King Helicopter from the decks of the Aircraft Carriers USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Saratoga. He flew 38 Direct Combat Support Missions in support of Operation Desert Storm.

We also participated in the Wreaths Across America Program sponsored by Worcester Wreath Company, which has been decorating wreaths on graves at Arlington National Cemetery for 20 years. Seven ceremonial wreaths were placed to remember those who served, honor their sacrifices, and teach our younger generations about the high price of our freedoms. Specially made wreaths for Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and POW/MIA were placed on memorials during a unique ceremony that was coordinated simultaneously at over 400 participating locations all across the Country and around the World. American Legion Post 257 in Vineyard Haven conducts this ceremony at Oak Grove Cemetery at the Directory for the Avenue of Flags.

We thank the membership of the American Legion Post 257 in Tisbury for the use of their space at Seamen's Bethel Annex for the satellite Veterans Office.

Every month I continue to write on veterans benefits for the 55 Plus Times, be involved with the Dukes County Health Council, go to all veterans organizational meetings, go to training with the Department of Veterans Services. I am still sending care packages to island soldiers with the help and generosity of the people of Martha's Vineyard, especially the Tisbury Firefighter Association. Thank you to everyone who donated to our troops. As of this date, we have three island men serving in Iraq or Afghanistan and numerous others serving in the U.S. and around the world. If you know of someone serving please call my office with the address.

Respectfully submitted,
Jo Ann Murphy
Director of Veterans Services