

REPORT OF THE VETERANS AGENT/DIRECTOR OF VETERANS SERVICES

To the Inhabitants of Abington:

As Veterans Agent and as Director of the Office of Veterans Services, Town of Abington, I am pleased to submit its annual report.

There are many services the Director is responsible for. I am providing a short summary of a few. Alcohol and Drug treatment; Veteran Employment and Training Services; V.A. Compensation and Pension matters; Hospitalization and Domiciliary care rehabilitation, plus many others.

Veterans Agent is responsible to administrate Massachusetts Department of Veterans Service program under Mass. General Law 115 to assist Veterans and their dependents in a time of need. Being a Veteran does not automatically make you eligible for benefits. Eligibility to receive entitlements has to be determined by the office of Veterans Affairs. My office will assist all Veterans with advice and paper work to help secure entitlements and benefits, if entitled. If you are a veteran, spouse, dependent widow/widower/parent of a deceased veteran or have a question on eligibility, please call or visit my office. My office is located at Town Hall, Room 207, next to the Selectman's Office. Phone # 781-982-0056.

It is with great pride that I report that the Department of Veterans Service (Abington) has helped 272 Abington Veterans. Here is a summary of both federal and State Benefits. These records are provided by the Veterans Benefits Administration and by the office of performance analysis as of March 2006.

Department of Veterans Affairs compensation and pension, Federal Benefits:
Veterans served 201; Veterans net award total \$187,229.00; Veterans annual award \$1,464,751.00.

Massachusetts Department of Veterans Service, State Benefits under M.G.L. Chap. 115, (108) CMR: Veterans served 58; Veterans net award total \$32,321.00;
Veterans annual award \$219,550.00.

Total Veterans served 240; Total Federal and State beneficiary award = \$1,688,301.00.

By participating in training seminars and conferences, that I attend throughout the year, I have been able to learn about the availability of Federal funds and entitlements and save the Town of Abington a great deal of money and also help me to administrate Mass General Law Chapter 115, which assists Veterans and dependents and surviving dependents of deceased Veterans, when they become entitled to these benefits, and when a need arises to keep their dignity and pride for their service to our country.

For general information as of FY06 there are 1,692 Veterans who reside in the Town of Abington, not including family and dependents.

Some of my scheduled time is put to:

Visits to the Brockton/West Roxbury/Jamaica Plain V. A. hospitals to visit or take local Veterans for treatments/appointments.

Visits to the homes of disabled Veterans along with visits to widows of deceased Veterans for the purpose of updating their claims, and to file new claims.

Visits to the local nursing homes.

Called upon Junior High School & St. Bridget School each Veterans and Memorial Day to help the children observe these two very important Patriotic Holidays.

I want to thank the Abington Old Town Post # 5737, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Abington American Legion, Lewis V. Dorsey Post 112 and their Ladies Auxiliary for all the support they have given me all year. The Honor Guard for both Post's are always ready for any special occasion I have requested, i.e. dedications of streets, blvd, ways for Veterans who were "KILLED IN ACTION". Dedications and many many other occasions. Thanks to Abington American Legion Post 112 Ladies Auxiliary for their generous donation during the Holiday for our needy Veterans and Families. Also I want to thank St. Bridget's ST. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry for their work with our needy Veterans.

Thanks to both Veterans Posts and their Ladies Auxiliary's for all the local community projects they are involved with.

Thanks to the Selectmen for their recommendation to our local developers for naming Streets after our local Veterans "KILLED IN ACTION". The Honor Guards from Post # 5737 Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion Post 112 attend all dedication ceremonies to Honor their "FALLEN comrades", from all Wars, with Full Military Honors.

Also Thanks to U.S. Veterans Vietnam Era, Post #2 SSG. Richard A. Fitts Chapter, for volunteering to help honor our "Fallen Heroes" and the projects they are involved with in our community. SSG. Fitts was killed in action in Vietnam. His parents, M/M Walter Fitts, were lifelong residents of Abington. The Chapter is now part of the Abington Veterans Community and hold their meeting at the Abington American Legion Hall. (Memorial building).

A special thanks to Mary Johnson, my secretary, for all her expertise and constant support to this office, the Veterans and this great Town of Abington, God Bless.

Respectfully Submitted
"For the Love of Freedom"

Joseph D. Colantoni
Director of Veterans Services'