

VETERANS CORNER Families of Veterans

Written by Donald Thompson
Monona County
Commission of Veterans Affairs
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Am I eligible for allowances to help pay for a Veteran's burial and funeral costs?

You may be eligible for veterans burial allowances if you're paying for the burial and funeral costs and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another government agency or the Veteran's employer. You must also meet all of these requirements.

One of these relationships or professional roles describes your connection to the Veteran:

- You're the Veteran's surviving spouse (Note: We recognize same-sex marriages.), or
- You're the surviving partner from a legal union (a relationship made formal in a document issued by the state recognizing the union), or
- You're a surviving child of the Veteran, or

- You're a parent of the Veteran, or
- You're the executor or administrator of the Veteran's estate (someone who officially represents the Veteran)

The Veteran must not have received a dishonorable discharge, and one of these circumstances must be true:

- The Veteran died as a result of a service-connected disability (a disability related to service), or
- The Veteran died while getting VA care, either at a VA facility or at a facility contracted by VA, or
- The Veteran died while traveling with proper authorization, and at VA's expense, either to or from a facility for an examination, or to receive treatment or care, or

- The Veteran died with an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death, if they would've been entitled to benefits before the time of death, or
- The Veteran died while receiving a VA pension or compensation, or
- The Veteran died while eligible for a VA pension or compensation at time of death, but instead received full military retirement or disability pay

Or:

- The Veteran had been getting a VA pension or compensation when they died, or
- The Veteran had chosen to get military retired pay instead of compensation

Note: We'll also provide an allowance for the cost of transporting a Veteran's remains for burial in a national cemetery.

You can't get burial allowances for certain individuals

We don't provide burial allowances if the individual died:

- On active duty, or
- While serving as a member of Congress, or

- While serving a federal prison sentence

What kind of burial benefits can you get?

If you're eligible, you may receive:

- VA burial allowance for burial and funeral costs
- VA plot or interment allowance for the cost of the plot (gravesite) or interment
- VA transportation reimbursement for the cost of transporting the Veteran's remains to the final resting place

Note: You'll need to pay for these services or other costs first before you apply for an allowance.

Is there a time limit for filing?

You must file a claim for a non-service-connected burial allowance within 2 years after the Veteran's burial or cremation. If a Veteran's discharge was changed after death from dishonorable to another status, you must file for an allowance claim within 2 years after the discharge update.

There's no time limit to file for a service-connected burial, plot, or interment allowance.

What documents do I need to

send with my application?

You'll need to send copies of these documents:

- The Veteran's military discharge papers (DD214 or other separation documents)
- The Veteran's death certificate
- Any documents or receipts you have for the cost of transporting the Veteran's remains
- A statement of account (preferably with the letterhead of the funeral director or cemetery owner) that has this information:
 - The Veteran's name, and
 - The type of service or item purchased, and
 - Any credits, and
 - The unpaid balance

You don't need to file a claim as a surviving spouse, as long as you're listed as the Veteran's spouse on the Veteran's profile. When we receive notice of the Veteran's death, we automatically pay a set amount to those eligible surviving spouses to help pay for the plot, the cost of interment, or transportation of the remains to the cemetery.

Back to Forward...

The Christmas Countdown

By DeAnn Kruempel

The older I get the faster time goes, or so it seems. Once Thanksgiving leftovers are polished off, it is Christmas.

This was not so when I was a kid. I remember counting down the days, beginning in November; I thought Christmas would never come! I loved every part of the holiday. The first part of December Mom made fruit cake. The spicy-sweet aroma filled the house, but she wrapped it up and stored it away. We had to wait until Christmas!

It took a lot of cookies for our family of eight, and our mother often had a plate of sweet treats in hand when we visited family and friends. Baking began early in December. Gallon jars and metal canisters of various cookies packed the "pantry" out in the cold porch. Dark, chewy molasses cookies, raisin filled cutouts, chocolate chip (Delmer's favorite), and Mom's special melt-in-your mouth sugar cookies tempted anyone wandering aimlessly through the porch. OK, so a few disappeared. I am sure Mom knew, in spite of our painstaking efforts to restock the remainder, but most of them waited until Christmas.

Then there were the presents. I loved going shopping with Dad for a gift for Mom. Mom took me shopping for Dad's present, even though he said he just wanted a pair of socks. At school

we made ornaments or cutting boards to bring home. Wrapping in secret was a challenge. I felt really important when I ordered everyone to "stay out of the kitchen" as I frantically cut paper, wrapped and taped. I watched the door like a hawk so no one would peek and find out what they were getting.

The folks spent several days shopping for gifts for us kids. When I was little, I wondered what I would get. The anticipation and secrecy made Christmas all the more exciting, but it didn't make it come any faster.

As I got older I learned to hint subtly as to what I wanted: "Mom, I want a pair of snow boots for Christmas." A couple girls at school already had some. Unlike the overshoes we wore over our shoes, snow boots had soft, furry lining and we stepped into them with stocking-feet. Way cooler than overshoes. I had to have a pair.

One day after school, I walked in just as Mom came out of the entry that was attached to the living room. I noticed paper bags stacked on the shelf above the coat rack. That was it! The secret hiding place for presents! When Mom went out to do chores, I sneaked into the small room. I scanned the bags, checking if any might be about right for a box of snow boots. There were several possibilities, so I was pretty hopeful. But I really, really wanted to know if I was getting snow boots. I had to know. I couldn't wait!

So, I hauled a wooden chair from the living room and set it under the shelf. I could just barely reach the packages, but I managed to pull the one off the top. I peeked in. No boots. I kept snooping until, aha! There it was, a box with a picture of black boots on the side. My heart pounded as I stacked the packages back up the way they were.

I should have been thrilled. After all, I knew I was getting exactly what I wanted. But I felt awful. I had deprived myself of the fun, the anticipation, the waiting. That year the countdown to Christmas took even longer.

In the years following, I don't remember asking for any particular presents. No doubt, I still hinted, or maybe Mom asked. I still loved everything about Christmas, the baking, the shopping and the presents.

It still seemed to take forever for Christmas to come, but I never, ever snooped again.

Don't Wait! Fill Your Gift List Now!

Kruempel's books, *Putting On the Big Boots*, and *Once Upon a Midwest Sunset*, compilations of the stories in her columns, along with her five other books, are available on Amazon. Signed copies can also be purchased at the Harrison County Welcome Center AND the Loess Hills Visitor Center & Gift Shop in Moorhead. Contact her at deannkruempelauthor@gmail.com

Mom's Favorite Butter Sugar Cookies

- 1 cup butter* (see note below)
- 1 egg
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 cups flour*
- ½ tsp. soda
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar
- Dash salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, salt and vanilla. Mix well. Add flour, soda and cream of tartar. Mix. Chill one hour. Form into small balls. Flatten with a glass dipped in sugar. Bake at 350, approximately 8 minutes or until edges just begin to brown.

(*This is Mom's original recipe. My sisters agree that ingredients have changed, and suggested either cutting back the amount of butter or increasing the amount of flour slightly. I make them using ¾ cup of butter.)

OUR MISSION

Our journalistic Mission for The Mapleton Press is to bring local, relevant information to our readers in an effort to keep our communities engaged and aware. We are committed to print only the truth and be the trusted source for local news, to shine a light on local government entities, and motivate action when necessary on crucial civic matters. We will document history as it happens, and help readers re-live the history of the past. Our belief is that a strong newspaper is the glue that holds a community together.

Santa's Village

Rotary Roadside Park
Mapleton, Iowa
Established in 2020

Friday, Dec. 16 and Saturday, Dec. 17: 6-8 p.m.
(weather permitting)

- Santa's elves will be handing out "GOODY BAGS" to the children
- Kids can put their **LETTER TO SANTA** in Santa's mailbox
- Santa will be waiting at the end in his **NEW CABIN**
- Kids and families will be able to get out to have their **PICTURE** taken with Santa.
- You'll receive a Mapleton Holiday Extravaganza **HANDOUT** for Light Contest voting and Scavenger Hunt.

Free Will Donation with proceeds going to the Mapleton City Park Shelter House Project

Late Night Shopping

On Friday, Dec. 16 a number of Mapleton businesses will be OPEN until 8 p.m. including Graceful Boutique, Kraft Clothing, Gee I Need Coffee, Main Street Spirits, Revolving Closet, P&R Cards, Hometown, Beef-n-Brew and Hawkeye Bar for extra Holiday Shopping or grab a bit to eat! There will also be some make-n-take activities at local businesses.

Please submit photo and information for the Mapleton Press's

Cute as a BUTTTON

Special featuring babies born in 2022

Please include the baby's name, date of birth, birth weight, parent's names, siblings and grandparents/great-grandparents. Pictured on the right is a sample of the announcement. There is no charge to submit a baby and can be submitted by parents or grandparents or great-grandparents who live in the coverage area.

Deadline is Friday, Jan. 6th, 2023

The Mapleton PRESS

Send to Jenna Comes by email: reporter@mapletonpress.com, by mail: PO Box 187, Mapleton, IA 51034 or drop them off at The Mapleton Press office. For questions call 712-881-1101

The Special will be published on Jan. 19, 2023!

ANNA KAY

ANNA KAY COMES

Weight: 9 lbs, 10 oz.
Length: 21 inches
Parents: Jenna and Daniel of Mapleton
Siblings: Morgan (age 5), and Brooke (age 3)
Grandparents: Jerry and Julia Jacobs of Vetter, IA; Jim and Corrie Comes of Atlantic, IA

Name of Business Sponsor

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