

Inside the...

MONONA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Veterans Affairs Office

610 Iowa Avenue, Onawa, Iowa 51040 (Third Floor of Courthouse)

Office – 712-433-3710

Hours: Tuesday-Wednesday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Thursday: 8 a.m. to Noon

The Main Duties of Veterans Affairs Office

The main duties of the Veterans Affairs Office are to help veterans become aware of what benefits they may be entitled to and to assist them as they navigate the processes of obtaining these benefits.

This ranges from VA home loans to educational benefits to disability benefits, to nursing home benefits, burial benefits, to retirement pensions and much more.

Don Thompson, Veterans Affairs Director, said the main duty of his office is to be an advocate for veterans and their families.

"I do medical research, civilian legal and veteran law research, and much more," he said. "Some veterans claims take as little as ½ hour to complete the paperwork on, other claims I have up to 20 or 30 hours into."

Services Veterans Affairs Office:

Thompson deals predominantly with veterans, so 99% of what he does is geared directly to the veteran community.

He tries to reach the general public through stories in the Veterans Corner articles. Some of the articles are geared specifically for veterans, but not all of them.

In May 2023, Thompson will hit the three year mark

as the veteran service officer.

"What I like the most about my job is being able to make a difference in the life of my veterans and their families," he said. "A lot of what I do leads to positive changes for them that will last the rest of their lives. It may be in the form of a pension or monthly check for disability compensation, or helping them gain access to VA health care. It might be something as simple as helping with groceries or utilities, or any combination of all items previously mentioned."

When a veteran opens up to Thompson and start really talking to him, sharing their stories, hopes, fears, anger or more, this humbles him and he feels honored that they trust him enough to do that.

"I've had grown men sitting in my office in tears while sharing their story and I've had a few women walk in and say 'I am about to become a widow and I'm scared to death' or 'I have just become a widow and I don't know what to do.' Those are hard conversations to have, very painful conversations, even for me!" Thompson said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DON THOMPSON

This is a picture looking from main entry of the courthouse down the hall.



Don Thompson
Veterans Affairs Director
mocova@mononacounty.org

He said he thinks people know that when they come into his office that they are in a safe place and that he will not abandon them.

"I will do everything I can for them," Thompson said. "This trust they put in me is sacred, and it is the interactions with the people that come to see me, the work we do together, and the results they eventually get. That, is my favorite thing about this job."

Inside the Monona County Courthouse feature conducted by Jenna Comes, Mapleton Press

Inside the Monona County Courthouse is a special feature to help readers understand what goes on in each office at courthouse.

Area Briefs

Feb. 16

Scarlett O'Hatters

Mapleton Scarlett O'Hatters will eat at the Beef-n-Brew on Thursday, Feb. 16. Meet there at 11:30 a.m. for Noon luncheon. Please be prepared to tell about a funny and favorite, or most unusual, or mysterious Valentine you ever received. Planners are Bonnie Banks and Sara Snow. New members welcome!

Dementia Support Group to Meet

Dementia presents special considerations for families. A support group is available through the Alzheimer's Association to help find answers, ideas and support for families affected. The group is open to anyone and meets the third Thursday of each month at the Faith Lutheran Church in Onawa at 1 p.m. Next meeting is February 16.

A guest speaker will attend to share information about related money matters along with occupational therapy ideas for making time with an affected loved one more positive and to help them find more independence, meaning and safety. Facilitators are Jill Ehlers and Cheri Hardison.

Feb. 17

Parents Night Out

St. John's United Methodist Church invites you to Parents Night Out on Friday, Feb. 17 from 5-10 p.m. Treat yourself to a night out while

church members watch the kids for free. This is for ages 2 and older. The night includes light supper, movie, craft, snacks and more. To pre-register call/text Daniel at 712-840-9062; Jenna at 712-210-1425 or Linda at 712-251-5882.

Feb. 19

Castana Church Pancake Supper

The Castana Community UCC Church will have their annual Pancake Supper on Sunday, Feb. 19. Serving will be from 4:30-6:30 p.m. The menu is all you can eat pancakes, sausage, coffee and hot chocolate.

Feb. 20

Courthouse Closed

The Monona County Courthouse will be closed on Monday, Feb. 20 in observance of Presidents' Day.

Feb. 21

Denison Zone Hour

The Denison Zone "Hour of Prayer" will be held on Feb. 21 at Faith Lutheran Church in Deloit. The service is titled "My Soul Rejoices," written by Rev. Dr. Mitchel Schuessler of Clarinda, and includes hymns, the Word, and prayer. Alex Smith, from Denison, is currently serving as Vicar at St. Paul Lutheran in Carroll and will take part in the service. Coffee will be served at 9 a.m. with the service beginning at 10 a.m. Everyone is invited to attend this

joyous and uplifting service.

Feb. 22

Yoga at the Nature Center

The Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center will be hosting yoga class on February 22 at 5:30 p.m. Join us for an ALL Levels class as we gently move our bodies with our breath! Unwind after a busy day with this yoga practice. Starting with a quick guided meditation and slowly moving our bodies, this class is for everyone to enjoy with the goal of leaving class relaxed and refreshed. This class is taught by certified yoga instructor, Chan Follen. Please pre-register by calling 712-258-0838 or emailing ksandage@woodburyparks.org. This is a free class. Yoga mats are not provided.

Feb. 25

Winter Tree

Identification Hike

Identifying trees by their leaves and fruits is easy, but have you ever wondered how to identify a tree during the winter without those clues? During this educational walk, you will learn how to identify trees in the winter by looking at bark and twigs. The program takes place at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center on Saturday, February 25, from 10-11 a.m. This program is designed for adults. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy walking shoes. Please pre-register by calling 712-258-0838 or emailing ksandage@woodburyparks.org.

Reason #340

"Because we like facts gathered by professionals better than rumors repeated by amateurs."

Subscribe & get the facts.

The Mapleton Press

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Birthday Card Shower honoring

CECELIA "TOOTIE" BUMSTEAD

We would like to honor our mother Tootie Bumstead with a card shower!

She is turning 80 on

February 18, 2023. She would love to hear from people.

Please send cards to Tootie Bumstead Pleasant View Care Center

Assisted Living

200 Shannon Drive

Whiting, Iowa 51063

Hanlin's celebrate 50th anniversary

Richard and Rebecca Hanlin of Schleswig will celebrate their 50th Anniversary on February 16. Please help them celebrate their milestone by sending a card to PO Box 151, Schleswig, Iowa 51461.



Richard and Rebecca Hanlin

Ute VFW is having its

63rd Annual **STEAK NIGHT FUNDRAISER**

Friday, February 24, 2023

5:30 P.M.-1:30 A.M.

at Ute VFW, 113 W. Main St. - Ute, Iowa
AKA Sabor a Mexico

\$60⁰⁰ before February 20
\$65⁰⁰ at the Door

*Appetizers, 12 oz. Ribeye, Baked Potato, Dinner Roll, Vegetable

*DOOR PRIZE DRAWING

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

Come out and support your troops and veterans. Your support is deeply appreciated.

Buy, sell, trade — Classifieds!

FFA Omelet Brunch

Sunday,

February 26, 2023

8:00 a.m.-12:30p.m.

Mapleton Community Center
Mapleton, Iowa



Serving: omelets, homemade rolls, toast, coffee, juice and fruit cup

Admission: Free Will donation

Sponsored by the MVAO FFA and FFA Alumni Group. Proceeds provide funding for FFA leadership conferences and activities.

Ute Town & Country Fundraiser

Ladies Night

Saturday, February 25, 2023

• Drinks-5 p.m. • Meal-6 p.m.
Vendors • Prizes • Games

Tickets \$50 each

Need not be present to win!

Contact Lonnie Carlson, Jeremy Creese, Richard Hageman, Mariah Nutt, Jimmy Carlson, Annie Teut at Sparetime or Susie Bird at Ute Tire

TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR!!

St. John's
United
Methodist
Church



ANNUAL FISH FRY

Friday, Feb. 24, 2023

4:30 to 6:30 P.M.

Dine at St. John's UMC
In! 212 S. 7th St., Mapleton

Adults: \$13⁰⁰

Kids up to age 10: \$10⁰⁰

• Delivery in Mapleton •
Call Glenda Muckey 712-840-1237
or Judy Martin call 712-840-9871

Catered by Staley's